The National
Future Farmer

Published by the Future Farmers of America

April–May, 1984

Inside this Issue: Straight Talk From The Stars
A Feedlot For His Future

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The National Future Farmer
Published by the Future Farmers of America

April-May, 1984
Volume 32 Number 4 ISSN 0027-9315

A Word With The Editor

April has always been a favorite month. With spring comes warm, breezy days and a new planting season.

This time of year also marks a turning point for many FFA members who are weighing their options for the future. Decisions need to be made, plans discussed.

Graduation day is only a month away for some of you. For others, that day is still years ahead. In either case, each of you—as vo-ag students in pursuit of agricultural careers—have a unique set of choices and opportunities to consider as you shape your future days.

This issue is filled with stories designed to help you understand more about those options. "Future Family Farms," on page 14, shines a spotlight on the changing family farms in America. It accents the challenges FFA members of today will face on these family farms of the future, and offers simple but important advice.

Speaking of good advice, we went straight to the source when we asked the 1983-84 regional Star Farmers and Star Farmer of America to reveal their feelings and thoughts on what helped them establish successful careers in production agriculture. Read more about our FFA "stars" in "Straight Talk From The Stars," page 18.

Weighing your options is not easy. We know how critical it is to have as much current information as possible, before you can make such decisions. Our investigation into the current status of the farm machinery industry will bring you up to date on this important segment of agriculture.

Each of you faces a unique set of choices on your pathway leading to the future. That path, as we all know, can take many a twist and turn. With good judgement and leadership, you can be confident the path you take will be just right—*for you.*

Wilson Carnes

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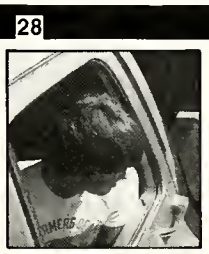

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Cover: *Cover Photo by Michael Wilson*
Scott Vathauer, 19, of Barnes, Kansas, finishes feeding a herd of hungry cattle on the Vathauer family farm in Kansas. Scott's new fenceline feedlot demonstrates his eagerness to get established in the cattle business. His story begins on page 28.

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SCHRADE CUTLERY CORP. ⅓ page

The FFA News in Brief

HARRY W. SANDERS, 88, one of four co-founders of the Future Farmers of America, died January 17, 1984 in Roanoke, Virginia. Mr. Sanders joined the faculty of Virginia Tech University as an assistant professor of agricultural education in 1925. The same year, he and three colleagues formed the Future Farmers of Virginia, which later expanded to become the FFA.

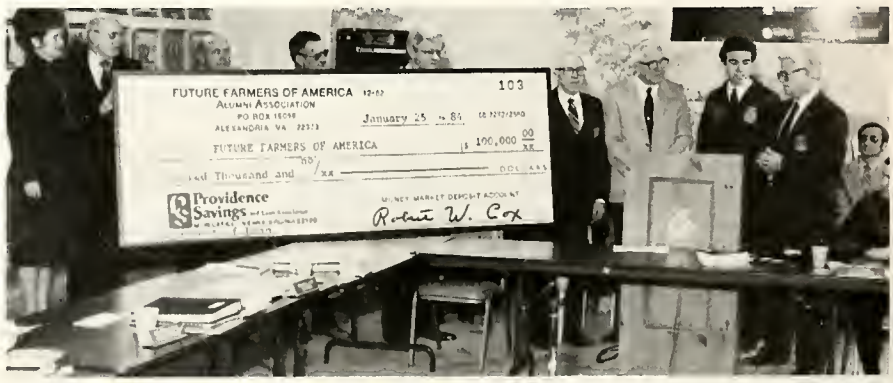
A NEW AWARD, called the "Triangle award," was sponsored by Charles and Agnes Conrad, of Kansas City, Missouri, through the National FFA Foundation in 1983, recognizing eight FFA members with $500 checks in December. The purpose of the award is to "help those young people struggling to get established in farming, who had not received other cash awards or were not able to get support from parents." Winners: Bryan Sommer, MN; Kurt Berhardt, NE; Glenn J. Eeton, MN; Jeff Jeske, IA; George Kettenring, KY; Kerwin Mann, KS; Rod Morris, IL; and James Sappington, MO.

THE NEW FFA PUBLIC Service Announcement (PSA) Campaign launched this year has been a success, according to Cameron Dubes, director of information for the FFA. The PSAs were seen from coast to coast during FFA WEEK 1984 in February. Sixty-nine agricultural magazines agreed to publish the announcements, 61 percent of all television stations aired them, and countless newspapers and radio stations used the PSAs.

A SPECIAL FFA REPORT: The national FFA organization has laid plans to include a 16-page insert in an upcoming issue of *The National FUTURE FARMER* magazine. Tentatively called the *"1984-85 FFA Award and Program Special Report,"* the special section will spell out information about every award and program the FFA has to offer.

CARL GERHARDT, SENIOR vice president of DeLaval, a division of Alfa-Laval, Inc., has been named 1985 chairman of the National FFA Foundation Executive Sponsoring Committee. Mr. Gerhardt will assume those duties next year after Dr. Hilmer Jones, vice president for North American Operations of MSD AGVET, a division of Merck and Co. Inc., steps down as chairman. Each year top agribusiness leaders like Gerhardt and Jones provide FFA with leadership and support through the National FFA Foundation.

TWO CONTESTS REINSTATED: The National FFA Board of Directors met at the National FFA Center in Alexandria, Virginia, for their annual January meeting to discuss important business concerning the Future Farmers of America. After considerable discussion, the board moved to reinstate two national FFA judging contests for 1985, which had been scheduled for elimination. The "Milk Quality and Dairy Foods" judging contest will be called the "Dairy Foods" judging contest, and will include a section on marketing and management. The new Poultry judging contest will add a section on management practices. Both contests are pending sponsorship as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, Inc. In an unrelated matter, the board moved to eliminate immediately the charge placed on phone orders to the National FFA Supply Service. They also moved in favor of studying a potential national FFA parliamentary procedure activity.



The National FFA Alumni Association paid off part of a loan from the FFA with this huge $100,000 check at a joint meeting between National FFA Board of Directors, National FFA Alumni Council and past presidents of the council. Alumni Council President Eldon Witt, far right, makes the presentation to Ron Wineinger, national FFA president, and Thaine McCormick, acting national FFA advisor.

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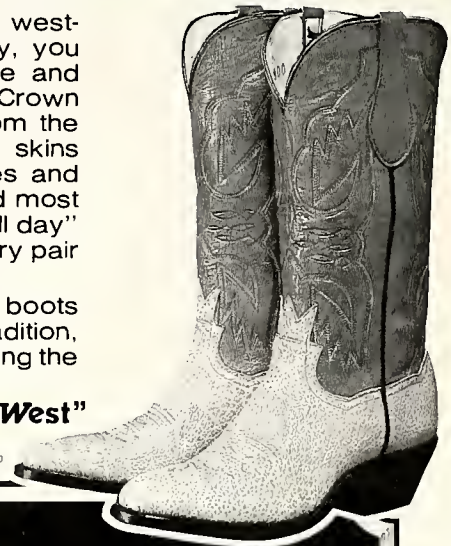

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NEW RULES

Complete rules are available from State and National FFA offices or by writing Hesston Corporation. A formal entry form is not required.

1. Entrants must be bonafide members of the FFA who are in good standing. Each member may submit only one entry.
2. Message must be submitted in 100 words or less stating how farmers and/or ranchers are improving the standard of living and the economy in North America.
3. Entries must conform to the rules of the contest, with the date submitted, name, age, address and phone number of the entrant, and the FFA Chapter legibly written.
4. Entries will be judged entirely upon their content, which should be original in nature.
5. In case of similar or duplicate messages, the one with the earlier postmark will be declared the winner. All entries become the property of Hesston Corporation.
6. Entries will be judged by a panel of agri-industry executives selected by Hesston Corporation. Judges' decisions are final and not subject to appeal.
7. Entries must be postmarked by Sept. 30, 1984 and mailed to "Salute," Hesston Corporation, Hesston, Kansas 67062.

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The Mailbag

Whiteville, North Carolina

The Public Service Announcements (PSA) that are now being aired on TV and radio across the country are great! These PSAs give nationwide exposure to our organization like it has never had before. Finally, the general public realizes what the Future Farmers of America are doing for the future of agriculture and they're ready to help. We are "Keeping America on the Grow" and now that everyone knows it, we're gaining more support than ever.

Kip Godwin
State President

Waterloo, Alabama

I'm writing to commend you on your special section in the February-March issue on "Computers in Agriculture." It was very interesting and highly educational. I am interested in computers and would like to see more articles on computers. Your special section was outstanding.

Scott Miller

In Memoriam

Harry Andrews

The FFA suffered a great loss on February 26, 1984, when Harry J. Andrews died suddenly of a heart attack. Mr. Andrews had worked for the National FFA Supply Service for over 34 years, serving as its director since 1979. He was 56. The Supply Service was just over a year old when Mr. Andrews came to work on November 2, 1949, as a clerk typist, after six years of service in the Navy. Over the years, Mr. Andrews held a number of positions with the Supply Service. He was appointed acting manager from May until October, 1951, when a permanent manager was named. He was appointed acting manager again in 1971; manager in 1975 and director in 1979.

Mr. Andrews was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, April 30, 1927, and moved to Alexandria in 1933. He is survived by his wife Lois and three children: Harry Jr., Sherry Conner and Valerie Downer.

Clear Lake, Minnesota

In your December-January issue, I found your story about Congressman Watkins to be very interesting. I'm sure there are a lot of people out in the world that were given an extra push by FFA. I know I have.

My FFA career ended in September of this year when it was cut by our school board, but I still owe a lot to FFA. It was FFA that encouraged me to get the most out of life and that will be something I can never repay.

Douglas M. Altrichter

Gloucester, England

As a long-time member of the British Young Farmers Federation I was very fortunate to be selected to represent the federation on a four-month agricultural exchange to the United States hosted by the FFA.

My trip began on July 26 at the State Presidents' Conference in Washington, D.C. After four interesting days in the capital, I travelled to New York state where I stayed with many different host families—farmers, ag teachers and a veterinarian.

In September I moved to Ohio where I stayed with five families and had the opportunity to see Ohio farming in depth. I was also lucky in being able to visit Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota with one of my host families—an unexpected bonus.

My trip finished with the honor of attending the national convention in Kansas City, indeed an impressive convention.

I would like to thank the FFA international department, the people who arranged my program in New York and Ohio and all the kind families who hosted me and made my visit to the United States possible.

Rupert Klaiber

Sparta, Tennessee

I am writing this letter to compliment you on the article "Make Room For the Lady" in the October-November, 1983, issue. The article was very good and there should be more about girls in agriculture. I am in Ag II at White County High School and it's nice for us girls to be recognized, too. Thanks for giving us a chance.

Billie Sue Hickey

Tuttle, Oklahoma

I just received the newest issue of *The National FUTURE FARMER* and think it's a great issue. While going through it, I noticed the article "Careers in Agriculture: Teaching Vocational Agriculture." I've been interested in this field for several years and it was very helpful and informative. I am also interested in the field of agriculture engineering and wonder if you might be able to run an article on this subject. If so, it would help me greatly.

Jeff Handwerker

Memphis, Missouri

I am writing to commend you for writing such an interesting magazine. My brothers were previously enrolled in FFA and every time their magazine would come, I would get and read it first. Now I am in FFA and received my first issue and I am thrilled. Thanks for your time in making detailed interesting articles. I'm hooked—keep up the good work.

Danielle Brush

Send letters or notes with name, address and chapter to: MAILBAG, The National FUTURE FARMER, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309. All letters are subject to editing.

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Trends in Agriculture

Looking Ahead

TALKING TRACTORS: it looks as if those blinking red warning lights, which light up when the engine overheats, will soon be replaced—by a human voice which quickly directs the operator to the exact point of trouble. According to a recent issue of *Fertilizer Progress*, agricultural engineers in Texas are working on computerized speech systems for farm machinery that apply the technology of systems already used in autobanking, electronic games, cars and robots. At one time this technology was too bulky and expensive, but now inexpensive microprocessors are making such systems possible.

USING ROBOTS IN LIVESTOCK production will go a long way toward improving efficiency, says one University of Illinois agricultural engineer. Today there is more potential than ever before to integrate computer-assisted electronic devices into agriculture, says the engineer, who says industrial robots are already available on the market. Australian researchers, for example, have already developed a robot which can sheer sheep.

BICARB BOOSTER: Steers fed sodium bicarbonate gained 14 percent faster than those without it, according to recent research completed at Kansas State University. The bicarb-fed steers also consumed 8.5 percent more dry matter, says Dr. Keith Bolsen, professor of beef cattle research, who headed the study. Dr. Bolsen added that test steers fed sodium bicarbonate recorded the highest average daily gain—2.37 pounds per head.

FERTILIZER USE in the United States (and Puerto Rico) fell again last year, down 13 percent from 1982 and 22 percent from 1981, says a recent USDA report. The 1983 usage of 42.33 million tons is the lowest consumption of fertilizer since 1971-72.

FARMERS WHO HAVE BIG bales could easily save hundreds of dollars each year by properly storing or covering them, according to a report in *Farmland News*. Research shows that big bales left outside uncovered lose $8 to $10 in value per bale. Feeding losses were also higher for the outside uncovered bales, with feeding refusal by animals running 15 to 30 percent. Studies show that savings of lost hay would pay for a 20-cent-per-square-foot tarp for a three-high bale pyramid in one year and for all methods of storage if the tarp can be used a second year.

HANDLING AG CHEMICALS requires proper safety methods during this busy planting season. Remember these details if you're working with them:

- Use appropriate protective gear to avoid harmful contact.
- Get a respirator if necessary. Check with your dealer.
- Always read labels.
- Protect your eyes with goggles when using anhydrous ammonia. Carry a pocket squeeze bottle of water, a five-gallon water can on the tank and for added protection, five gallons on the tractor or towing vehicle. Water is the only effective first aid measure in case of mishap.

DESPITE WEED PROBLEMS on PIK acres last year, most farmers should stay with control programs that have proven effective over the years, says a report from Dekalb-Pfizer genetics. If broadleaf weeds were the problem, consider planting those fields to corn in 1984. If grassy weeds were the problem, consider shifting to soybeans, say the experts.

Giant foxtail was the most significant weed found in many PIK acres last year.

POWERFUL PEELINGS: tests on citrus oil found in orange peelings have demonstrated tremendous potential as an insecticide against fire ants and household pests. Now, USDA research scientists are making efforts to refine the early discoveries and evaluate the possibility of using orange peelings as commercial insecticides. Citrus oil, by the way, smells good and does not harm people.

WILL FARMERS SPEND MORE this year? According to a recent USDA report, U.S. farm spending on agricultural inputs may increas 15 to 20 percent in 1984, due to an expected 11 to 17 percent hike in crop acreage. Total fertilizer use could increase as much as 20 percent from the previous year's levels, and farm machinery sales in 1984 might gain 15 to 20 percent over 1983 sales.

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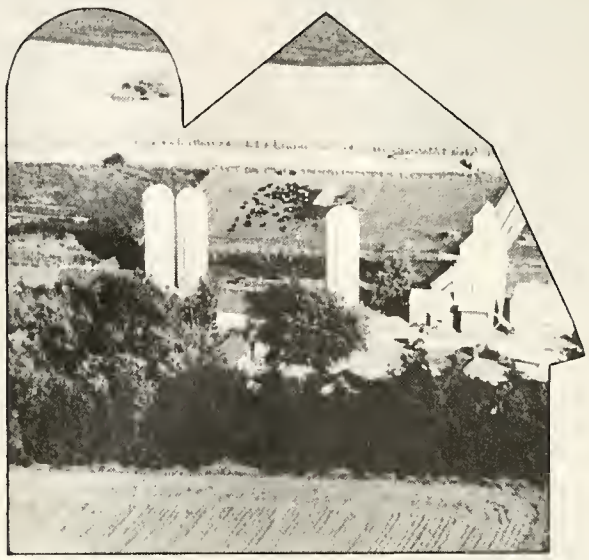


Future Family Farms

The letters FFA also stand for "Family Farms in America," the major source of agricultural production in the world. Here's a look at the future of family farms—and some challenges you can expect if you plan to operate one someday.

"FAMILY Farms in Peril!" scream the headlines. Everywhere you look, one expert or another is telling you how your cozy little family farm will soon be swallowed up by a larger farm, an airport or a parking lot.

Sounds like a sinister plot to take over the country. After all, few things are more American—outside of apple pie and mom—than the good old family farm.

But family farms in America are not dying. They are changing.

If you live on a family farm now, or dream of operating one someday with a family of your own, you need to be aware of those changes.

True, the larger, "corporate" farms have been growing rapidly in this country for a number of years. Those are the farms which gross over $500,000 annually in farm income. In 1969 only one in every thousand U.S. farms rang up sales of $500,000 or more. Today, the $500,000 farms number about one in every 100.

These "super" farms, which operate only 8 percent of all U.S. farmland, churn out more than a fourth of the total value of U.S. farm production, and reap an astonishing *three-fifths* of all U.S. net farm income.

It is also true that this dramatic increase in "super" farms over the last 15 years defies the downward growth trend in all U.S. farms in the same time frame. Since 1969, the number of U.S. farms declined from about three million to 2.4 million.

Still, the "family farm," broadly defined, is likely to remain the dominant type of firm in U.S. production agriculture for many years, even though there are fewer mid-size farms than ever today. (Small, part-time farms, along with large farms, are increasing as well.)

"Commercial farms of the future will continue to be family oriented in the sense that members of the family will supply or control the majority of the management and capital employed in the firm," says Sanford Belden, senior vice president of the Federal Intermediate Credit Bank (FICB) of St. Louis.

"However, commercial family farms of the future will be larger and more sophisticated than their counterparts of the early 1980s, as advances in agricultural technology continue to improve productivity and efficiency," he says.

What changes in agricultural technology will shape the tomorrows of "future family farmers"—those young people who are FFA members of today?

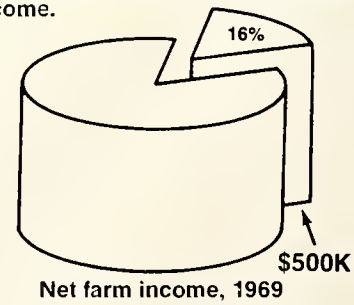
From a study sponsored by the Production Credit Association called *The Future of United States Agriculture 1983-2000,* Mr. Belden points to four areas:

Crop Technologies—"The future crop farm will concentrate on increasing production *efficiency,*" says the agribusinessman. Water management—specifically, better drip or trickle irrigation methods—will allow family farmers to use energy more precisely and at a lower cost, delivering water to crops only when it is needed. "Antitranspirants," used to inhibit water vapor loss, will play a major role in future family farms.

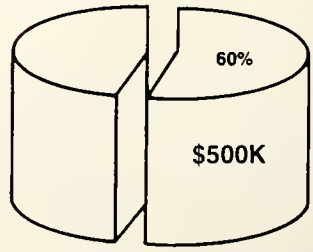
Crop hybrids will be developed and used for specific areas of the country—for example, salt tolerant wheat for the western United States. Plant growth regulators, nitrogen fixation for selected crops and more precise pesticide application will increase production and reduce environmental concerns created by chemical runoff.

Agricultural Mechanizations—"Equipment will become more expensive and complex, but will increase farmers efficiency by reducing time and labor in the field," says Mr. Belden. He says this new technology will increase crop yields, reduce losses, improve quality, reduce fuel and crop drying cost and improve

The $500,000 farms in 1982: one percent of U.S. farms, 60% net farm income.



Net farm income, 1969



Net farm income, 1982

the efficiency of fertilizer and pesticide application.

Family farms, which often rely on family members for labor needs, will begin using more automated equiment. Much of this new technology is being incorporated today in larger farms, which can justify the high cost of automation. But as technology becomes less costly, smaller farms will also be able to make these adjustments.

Automated equipment will increase harvesting efficiency by sensing harvest losses and making automatic height and speed adjustment on uneven terrain. Microcomputers will be used to properly balance operating speeds with crop harvesting efficiency. Field conditions will be monitored by sensors linked to weather satellites, to aid in irrigation scheduling.

Field conditions will be monitored by sensors linked to weather satellites, to aid in irrigation scheduling.

Animal Agriculture—"Animals will grow faster, be more disease resistant, use less feed per unit of production, produce more milk, meat and eggs at specific quality levels, and will reproduce more offspring per animal, each with more desirable genetic characteristics," says Mr. Belden. Genetic engineering will make it easier for family farmers to upgrade herds in a shorter length of time.

The agribusinessman says farmers will soon be able to raise an animal to produce a specific product for a specific market, resulting in greater coordination between production and marketing. Farmers will eliminate middle steps by making contract agreements with processors of livestock and poultry products.

"These changes will result in marketing being targeted to specific market segments by various agricultural organizations," he adds.

Communications and Information Management—"Accurate record keeping for animal agriculture will become more important in the future," says the agribusinessman, "particularly as confinement production systems are adopted and animals are more easily controlled and monitored."

Monitors using microprocessor technology will provide quick and easy access to information on feed intake, health status, and production efficiency. And although the investment in computer technology will be substantial for family farmers, Mr. Belden says it will be necessary to insure efficiency and profitability. "Financial analysis and management will become increasingly important in determining the success of family farms," he adds. •••

"Then it's all settled—John, you major in accounting; Bill, in computer science and Charlie will enroll in animal husbandry. Your mother and I will try to hang onto the old farm until you all graduate."

Coping With Farm Transfers:

Growing Up and Taking Over

WHO gets the family farm when mom and dad retire?

The answer may make or break family relationships in rural America.

For farmers ready to retire, turning over the family farm to someone else may be a tough decision. Things *really* get complicated when there are several adult "children" in the family who want to farm. Do parents divide the farm into small sections, none large enough to support a full-time farm lifestyle? Or do they transfer the farm to one child, perhaps causing the others to be envious or hurt?

Such decisions can damage family relationships if communication lines are not kept open, says Candyce Russell, researcher with the Agricultural Experiment Station at Kansas State University, Manhattan. Ms. Russell conducted a survey of Kansas families involved in farm transfers to identify successful ways of dealing with the situation.

In her survey of more than 500 Kansans, Ms. Russell found that open discussion within the family was the single most important item in easing the transfer and making it less stressful for all concerned.

"Openness was facilitated by a desire to keep the farm within the family, by a concern about equal treatment of children, the economics involved in farming, and the transfer of property," she says.

She also found that a "positive outlook on farming as a lifestyle and life in general," was a typical trait of farm families who transferred their operations from one generation to the next with greater ease and less stress.

But if farming is viewed as a "troublesome" occupation, full of debts, hard work and uncertainties, the parents may look on the transfer as more of an "unloading" than a "gift," says Ms. Russell. The parents in this situation may be caught between wanting to preserve a family heritage and yet believing that heritage to be diminished in value under their stewardship.

Though many families in the survey were able to work out their problems on their own through open discussions within the family, others sought professional help by talking with extension agents, farm management experts or estate planners. •••

Protecting Your Farm Partnership

By Bess Ritter May

YOU'VE thought it over. You've decided you want to stay on the farm.

You'd eventually like to take it over, so you figure the next step is to form a partnership with dad.

You've thought of all the benefits to a partnership: you and dad can combine your abilities to best suit the farm's needs; you can combine your assets—your cash, his buildings and land; you can take advantage of specific tax benefits—partners' salaries aren't subject to payroll taxes, for example.

You've finally mustered the courage to approach him about it, but one thing worries you. What happens to the partnership if and when dad dies?

That concern may sound morbid, but it's one of the unpleasant realities you must face if you enter the "real world" of farming as a partner with your dad or anyone else in the family business.

It doesn't have to be a problem, though, if you've both got insurance to protect your partnership. Without insurance, the partnership dies with the partner—all normal farming business will cease, new farming is out of the question; you will be limited to finishing up the affairs of the now "obsolete" setup. You may be tempted to continue working the farm, but you'll be personally liable for all losses.

What's worse, the extent of this grim affair may not be brief. It will depend on the deceased partner's heirs who won't be able to work the farm themselves, but will want an account of their share of its earnings and the net worth. This can tie up the farm business in lengthy legal battles.

All of this can be avoided with partnership insurance. Setting up this kind of insurance is simple. Just follow these steps:

1. Arrange with your partner to purchase individual insurance policies. If there are only two partners, each of you pay your own premium. If there are three or more, the farm business itself might buy a policy on the lives of all partners.

2. Seek advice from a local lawyer, banker, and accountant before deciding on the amount of insurance needed, how much premium each partner should pay, the beneficiary arrangements, tax effects and the policy assignments. Then review all details with an insurance agent with considerable agribusiness experience in your state.

3. Remember to check insurance rates. You can save money by comparing costs and policies offered by different agents and companies. Then pick the partnership insurance which offers the best coverage at the least cost.

4. Remember to give considerable thought to the formula you finally come up with. The plan must satisfy all heirs concerned—or become the basis of a long controversy. Regardless of the problems you face in setting it up, they'll be simple compared with the battles you may have to face when your partner dies—and the heirs insist on a settlement based on an inflated estimate of the deceased person's share of the agribusiness.

One way to determine a random value of each partner's interest in advance is to set up a fixed estimate for the goodwill plus the net book value of the farm. You can get this by deciding on the current value of all assets less all liabilities. Another plan is to leave the estimate of the farm to a trustee.

5. Arrange for other types of insurance which can make a great difference to the agribusiness should it lose a partner by death. If the farm will be paying off notes and loans at the time of the death, credit insurance can cover such obligations which can be especially difficult at this time. If there is a mortgage on land, buildings or livestock, and the stability of the farm's management depends on meeting those obligations, life insurance protection can be very valuable.

6. After you decide on an acceptable partnership insurance plan, set up an annual insurance "check-up." Many of the elements involved in policies are always changing, including ownership, management, profits and losses. Income and estate tax laws also change frequently. This can affect the insurance plan, premiums and benefit payments.

Don't put off these checkups. They're just as important as the review of any other operation which affects the profits of your jointly-operated farm.

There are plenty of benefits to partnership insurance, but most important is probably your peace of mind. If you don't want to continue to work the farm alone, you can liquidate all farming operations easily. But if you *do* want to continue with the business, the policies you've set up assure each partner that the family heirs will receive full share of the farm at an estimate approved in advance. In addition, creditors are assured that there will be no lapse in the credit standing of the farm.

Now, go ask dad about that partnership! •••

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Straight Talk Fro

These top FFA members were named regional Star Farmers last year for excellence in farming; one was named Star Farmer of America. Here, each reveals his own personal "five-point" formula for success.

THERE'S nothing finer than the sweet taste of success. And each person's method for success may be different.

And if you're interested in how successful people *become* successful, better sit back and read carefully. We asked four of FFA's top young farmers—each named regional Star Farmers last year—to reveal their "secrets for success." Each gives a five-step approach to achievement—in successful living, as well as successful farming.

The advice they offer may surprise you. But the results, in each case, are impressive. Rather than list their achievements, we thought you'd be interested in *how they achieved.* We hope you can gain something from their wisdom and experience. Perhaps someday you, too, can reveal your own "success plan" to fellow FFA members—as the next Star Farmer of America!

A Love For Agriculture

JIM Tugend, of Jeromesville, Ohio, is the best in the business. He earned the title Star Farmer of America at last year's National FFA Convention, after earning Star Farmer honors from the eastern region.

"Being named the 1983 Star Farmer of America was quite a finale to seven very rewarding years as a member of the FFA," says Jim.

Jim is a dedicated dairyman. He owns land in partnership with his sister, a former FFA member, and is also a partner in the 600-acre Tugend family farm. His latest goal is to earn a bachlor's degree in dairy science at The Ohio State University.

Photos by Bill Stagg

Here, Jim lists his five steps to success:

1. My love for agriculture. "The single most important thing that can account for my success is my love for agriculture," says Jim. "There is nothing more satisfying than breeding a cow with a straw of semen and then watching as the resulting calf matures into a cow, or watching spindly alfalfa seedings grow into a lush field of high quality hay.

"Being involved with the family farm allows me to be my own boss," he notes, "and more importantly, it allows me the freedom to be out-of-doors watching as the wonders of nature evolve each year."

2. My determination to succeed and overcome defeat. "Ask anyone who knows me and they'll tell you that if I really want something bad enough, I'll work my tail off trying to get it," says the Star Farmer.

"I'll never forget the time I got beat in my first year of showmanship at the county fair," Jim recalls. "I cried my eyes out, but Dad sat me down and said, 'Jim, if you start at the top the only way to go is down. But if you start at the bottom the only way to go is up.'

3. The importance of goal setting. Says Jim: "Once I got to high school I had a lot of big ideas. I wanted to get into everything—academics, sports, farming and the FFA.

"As I was spinning my wheels one day trying to go in half a dozen different directions, my advisor caught up with me and said, 'Why don't you stop and think about where you would like to be in seven years and then think about what you're going to have to do to get there?'," he recalls.

Jim says this was his first exposure to goal setting. "I

Left, Star Farmer James Tugend, preparing a syringe, says his love for agriculture accounts for his success. Below, western region Star Farmer Bob Chitwood makes calculations on the family's new computerized dairy ration system.

n The Stars

By Michael Wilson

realized that to be good at anything I was going to have to change my strategy. I needed academics since I wanted to go to college. Farming and the FFA went hand-in-hand, so sports went out the window.

"I'll admit I missed being with my friends at practices and games, but the hardest thing was getting it through their heads that I had more opportunities awaiting me in FFA and farming than I did in sports," says Jim.

4. A belief in quality over quantity. "As a freshman I believed that *quantity* was more important than quality. I wanted to be involved in everything. At that time I was also thinking in terms of increasing the size of the farm," says Jim.

"I have since come to believe that this is not the way to go," he says. "Not only is it nearly financially impossible, but it is also impractical. I plan to maintain my current size dairy and work to improve efficiency. This will be worth more in the long run as I will be more self-sufficient in growing the feed for the livestock."

5. A college education. "Whether to pursue a college career may be a debatable issue in some people's eyes, but in my opinion it is an invaluable asset," says Jim.

"Agriculture is becoming more and more sophisticated each year, making it a challenge to stay up to date on current methods and practices," he says. "My college education provides me with a sound foundation to build upon in terms of staying up to date. It also provides me with knowledge to make sound management decisions."

Make It Happen

For T.J. Martin, of Lamar, Nebraska, being named Star Farmer of the central region was a dream come true. T.J. lives on a family ranch and manages a beef herd on a feedlot setup, feeding over 850 head of his own cattle. He also manages a commercial cattle feeding program, and has 340 acres of his own and 160 acres of rented ground. "I'm now working on a deal to lease 1,200 acres of grassland and an additional 520 acres of irrigated farmland," says T.J. "With Dad's and my land combined I will be planting over 2,100 acres of corn and pinto beans this year."

T.J. lists the following as key factors to success:

1. Set goals and have a plan to achieve those goals. "Your plans should be short term and long term," he says. "Know where you're at today, where you're going tomorrow and where you plan to be one year or even five years from now. Goals are very important. Don't ever stop setting goals and always have several goals at one time.

"I may have a goal for a corn yield or a rate of gain on my cattle this summer, but at the same time, I have financial goals and goals for expansion of my operation that probably won't happen for several years," he says. "But by making the short term goals, some day I will make my long term goals."

2. Make it happen. "This is my favorite phrase," smiles T.J. "Nobody is going to give it to you or do it for you. You have got to do it yourself. There are people out there to help you – parents, ag teachers, neighbors or friends. But if you are not willing to put out the extra effort and do it, it won't happen. So *Make It Happen*."

3. Work smarter, not harder. "Work hard and then work just a little smarter than that," says T.J.

"It used to be one wrong decision might set you back a little. But today, one wrong decision can cost you your occupation. A farmer or rancher has to do everything smarter, from managing and marketing to dealing for a piece of equipment," he adds.

4. Expand and improve. "Try to expand and improve your enterprise every year," advises the regional star farmer. "Expand in size and improve productivity, yields and efficiency. Keep in mind there is always room for improvement."

5. Money makes money. "In other words, it takes money to make money, so don't be afraid to go in debt," he urges. "You

(Continued on Page 21)

Left, T. J. Martin, cattleman and central region Star Farmer, "made it happen" on his trip to the top. Below, Charles Hillsman, southern region Star Farmer, balances a large poultry operation with a cattle enterprise.

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Straight Talk

(Continued from Page 19)

have got to take the responsibility of a debt if you are going to expand and be a successful farmer."

Set Your Goals

BOB Chitwood, western region star farmer from Stillwater, Oklahoma, was midway through his vo-ag career when his family was forced to move the entire dairy herd to another location. Settling on a 1,120-acre farm near Sulphur, Oklahoma, the new 500-head Holstein operation features a computer system which records individual milk production and other statistics on the cows.

Bob says his "five-point" plan deals with FFA activities and how they relate to the future. He believes strongly in setting goals; in fact, it's a top priority.

1. Goal setting. "It's one of the most important factors in striving for an award such as Star Farmer," says Bob. "Goals should, in my opinion, serve as a plan leading you from one phase of FFA to the next. "

Bob advises FFA'ers to fit goals suited to career interests. "And remember, just as you change, your goals change also. As a freshman I wanted to be Star Greenhand. As a junior in college, I was striving for Star American Farmer.

2. Participation in FFA activities. "One of the most satisfying and challenging things I did in FFA was to participate in as many activities that I could in my chapter," says Bob. "Activities really provide a good place to fellowship and learn with others who share your same interests.

"Who knows," smiles Bob, referring to his pretty wife Shelly, whom he met in vo-ag class. "You might even find someone similar enough to become your wife. I did!"

3. Good records. "Good farm and financial records are a must if you're thinking about applying for awards," says Bob. "The experience gained from keeping records in FFA will improve your financial decision-making ability also.

"Everyone, sometime in life, will deal with finances," he says. "Why not learn now? It sure will help you later."

4. Family participation. "My older brother never had the experience of winning a Star Farmer award," he says. "But when I won, the whole family had won the "star family" award, in my eyes. FFA is a family event. All members of the family become involved.

"It would astonish you how much help I had from my mother and wife filling out books and applications," he adds.

5. That extra help. Bob says his spiritual life plays a large role in daily living. "There was always one other person who helped me in FFA," says Bob. "He protected my animals that were really his to begin with, gave me strength when I was weak, and never tried to impress upon me who was behind all my success. He is Jesus my Lord, the true author of success."

Learning From Others

CHARLES Hillsman, southern region star farmer from Watkinsville, Georgia, has established his career in farming with a diversified operation. He owns 178 acres and manages 67,500 broilers to go along with his commercial and purebred herds of Charlois, Brahman and Beefmasters, plus a group of Holstein replacement heifers.

"In my experience in FFA, I found that being involved in everything that came along taught me as much as anything," says Charles. And learning from the experience of others is Charles' most important piece of advice.

1. Take advice. "The advice that I received from my father and advisor always seemed to be on track and helped me get off to a good start," says Charles. "The experience I received helped me in many ways. It helped me to be able to make decisions that I could stand behind."

2. Set high goals. Charles has set goals for his purebred cattle herd throughout his vo-ag career. "I hope to have my purebred herd at top potential soon," he says.

Charles also set goals to develop leadership skills. He set a goal to become state FFA officer—and eventually became the Georgia Association's FFA vice president.

3. Don't get discouraged. "If you don't first succeed, try again," advises Charles. "In this way I've been able to look at the bright side behind every dark cloud."

4. Plan Ahead. "This is especially important in farming," says Charles. In modern agriculture, cash flow and a constant monitoring of finances is a must. "Try to make sure you can show a profit by figuring on paper first."

Charles developed a plan for his poultry operation to compliment his purebred and commercial cattle herds—and now the plan is becoming reality. "The poultry is helping make the payments on the farm, and also helps with the family living expenses. With my alfalfa hay and my herds of cows, they provide the other cash flow that it takes to operate the farm."

5. Stand behind your work. "Be proud of what you do," says Charles, "and make sure if you are farming that the quality of your farm products is high." Developing a good reputation is important, he says. "For example, if I sell a bull I make sure I can guarantee a bull is a sure breeder." •••

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Saving $$ With Sheep

This former FFA member shows how a low-labor SOE Program can help you save money for the future.

By Laurie A. Sordahl

Above, Kevin Bacon, of Milton, Wisconsin, displays one of his purebred Suffolk sheep. Kevin shows at about ten fairs per year.

SAVING money for college is no easy task. But more and more FFA members these days are finding a way around the college crunch: by using SOE (Supervised Occupational Experience) programs as a way to pay for tuition costs.

Kevin Bacon, a 21-year-old from Milton, Wisconsin, is one of those individuals. He's paying for his college education—with sheep. And with college costs averaging $6,000 to $7,000 a year, that's no small piece of change.

Kevin is currently a junior at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, majoring in meat and animal science. He still maintains a partnership with his parents, Donald and Charla Bacon. Kevin's flock consists of 75 head of registered Suffolks. "My family owns 20 acres and we rent an additional 30 acres for pasture. We buy all our hay and feed for the flock," says Kevin.

A past FFA member from Milton High School, Kevin served as president, vice president and secretary. He obtained the Wisconsin State Farmer degree award in 1979 along with the state's proficiency award for sheep. He also received state honors while a member of the meat and animal judging team.

"We started in 1970 with ten registered ewes and have been building since," Kevin recalls. "Now 90 percent of our flock is homebred. The sheep are a side business now. Both my parents work and I'm at school most times," he adds.

But when Kevin isn't busy with college, exhibiting sheep is one of his prime interests. "I show at about ten fairs a year," he says, "including six or seven Illinois county fairs, Iowa and Minnesota state fairs and of course, Wisconsin."

Kevin shows two flocks during the summer for other breeders. "I receive all the premiums from exhibiting these Columbian and Dorset flocks," he says. "I was even able to purchase a new pickup and trailer for transporting the sheep last year."

Kevin's achievements helped his family earn the title Wisconsin Premiere Suffolk Breeder award from 1976 to 1981. He has consigned sheep to various national sales, including the Midwest Stud Ram Sale and the Wisconsin Invitational Champion Sale. "At the latter sale we had the seventh place ewe in 1981—she sold for $6,000," he says.

Students who pick up on the idea of using a sheep operation to pay for college expenses can choose between producing market lambs or purebreds. "When students prepare to start their own flock, everything depends on the person's objective—it's quality, not quantity," he says.

"The day you purchase your stock is the day you make or break your sheep enterprise," says A.L. Pope, professor of meat and animal science at the University of Wisconsin. "It's best to start with crossbred ewes—consisting of a wool and meat breed. Plan to use a third breed to get a three-way cross," Professor Pope says, "because crossbreds are often more vigorous and growthy than purebreds."

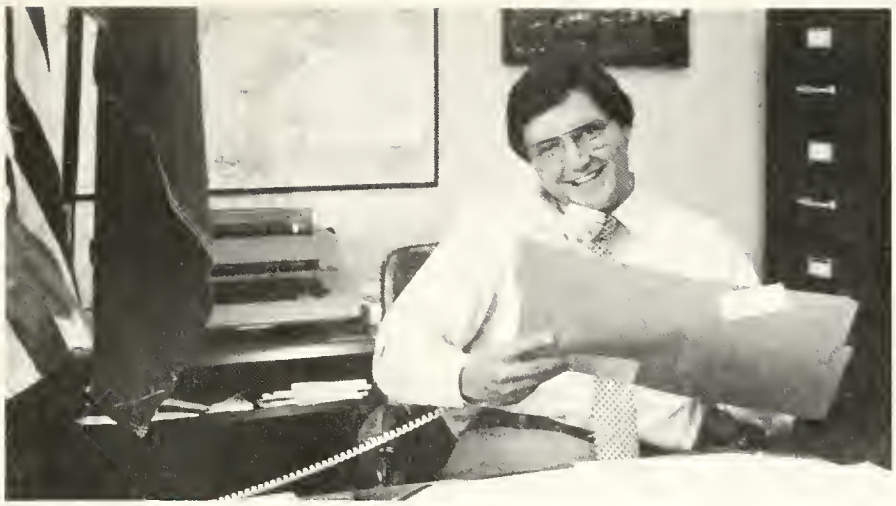
FFA members should consider buying feeder lambs in April, because this is usually the best time. Buying ewes in July and August is probably the best time, because the lambs are already weaned off. The professor recommends buying bred ewes in October and November. This way, a member won't have the expense of the ram for the first year.

If you plan to buy lambs for an FFA project, look for animals with leg length, body depth and length and muscle. These lambs tend to have superior performance over smaller-framed, poorly-proportioned lambs. Look also for lambs with width and thickness, especially in the leg.

With proper feeding and management, heavy lambs make the best candidates for showing at most county fairs and possibly the state fair. Showing can be an added learning experience, but should be kept in perspective.

One way to plan purchasing your sheep is by looking ahead. Pay no more than the expected selling price at fair time minus expenses. For example, if the market is expected to be around $55 per hundredweight and expenses are projected to be about $15 per head, then pay no more than $40 to purchase the lamb.

FFA members with sheep projects have an opportunity to learn much about feeding and managing a flock. Today, the sheep industry is viewed as the "opportunity" industry of American agriculture. For Kevin Bacon, raising sheep has not only brought him personal satisfaction, but he says, "It has given me opportunities to meet new people, view different events and engage in business practices." His sheep also help him get through college. Kevin Bacon did it—and you can too. •••



"The Pride of Spur, Texas"

Former National FFA Officer Elvin Caraway traded his blue corduroy jacket for a suit and tie, now using his leadership abilities as an office director for a U.S. Senator

By Pamela Cook

SENATOR Tower's hand-written message scrawled across his photograph hanging just inside Elvin Caraway's door seems to sum up a small-town boy's rise up the political ladder: "To Elvin Caraway—The pride of Spur, Texas—Senator John Tower."

In a country where people believe even a poor man's son can become president, it is of little surprise to see Caraway's accomplishments climb from the local to the national level.

From his beginning as the Spur, Texas, FFA Chapter president, to state president and then national vice president from the western region in 1978, Elvin's latest challenge—directing the work of Sen. Tower's West Texas office in Lubbock, Texas—is yet another step forward for the recent Texas Tech University graduate.

Success runs deep in the Caraway family. Elvin's younger brother, Bill Caraway, of Clovis, New Mexico, was elected national secretary of the Future Farmers of America this year. Bill's election marked a rare family achievement in the FFA—only two times in FFA history have two brothers previously reached national FFA offices. It's an example of the high goals both brothers try to achieve.

While brother Bill meets with FFA members all across the country this year, Elvin, 25, works in an office on the first floor of the Federal Building in Lubbock, overlooking the Lubbock County Court House. His Texas Tech diploma, "Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Economics," is displayed between signed photographs of President Ronald Reagan and Vice President George Bush.

A large map of Texas behind his desk, and a United States map on the opposite wall reminds one of the vast scope of his work.

Elvin says his involvement with Sen. Tower was "part luck and part timing."

"I was through with school," he says, "and I only lacked a few hours that I could complete on an internship basis." Just then a job as a legislative aide for Sen. Tower, in Washington, D.C., came open. Elvin was interested.

"I applied and was interviewed in November, and was asked to come to Washington on the first of January," he says. "If I had lacked six hours, or if I'd had six more, I couldn't have done it. It was just luck and timing."

Above, Elvin as National Officer, 1978

Elvin enjoyed his job in Washington. But something was missing. Again, good timing led him back to Texas.

"I loved Washington, but I still had a little too much country in my blood," he smiles. "There was a two-month lapse when there was no director in this office. Since I had some training in agriculture, and that is predominantly what we do out of the Lubbock office, the Tower officials decided to take a chance on me."

As it turned out, the senator's staff knew exactly what they were doing. Elvin was highly qualified for the position. "My job in this office is mostly dealing with agriculture," he says. "If I have *any* expertise, that is probably what it's in.

"I also do a good bit of travelling," he continues. "It's important to develop some kind of rapport with county officials in our 80 counties, so they feel free to call on the senator through us if they need to. That's really what I enjoy about the job more than anything.

"Washington is the sort of job where you get caught up in the bureaucracy and paper work—you have very little people contact," says Elvin. "Here, it is the other extreme. Most of it is with the people."

Elvin says FFA and his education at Texas Tech helped him see that being able to work with others is a high priority in life. "Naturally, if you can't get along with other people, you can't do a very good job for your boss," he explains. "And on the other extreme, if you are good with people then they see a lot of his (Sen. Tower's) efforts in a good perspective.

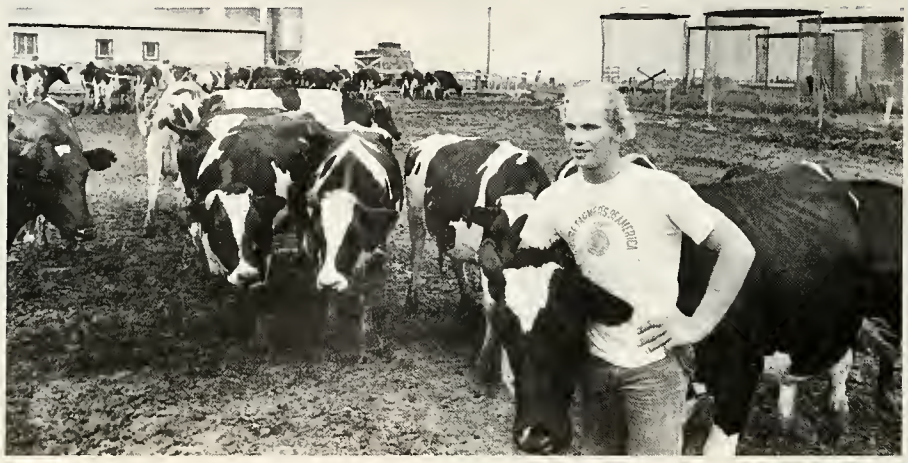
"I've always lived with the philosophy that it's great to be content and happy, but you should never be satisfied," says Elvin. "One of the greatest sins we can commit is to be satisfied with what we've done, or who we've helped, or where we've been, or where we're going."

"One of the greatest sins we can commit is to be satisfied with what we've done, or who we've helped, or where we've been, or where we're going."

Even though he's getting good experience in politics, Elvin says he has no interest in the field at this point in his life. "A lot of people who are my age say they want to be a congressman or a senator, and I think when you're as young as we are that's a greedy attitude," he says. "In my mind, the most successful politicians have established their careers and happen to be at the right place at the right time when they decided to run.

"I've learned it's not so glamorous a life as what some people think," he says. "It really is hard work if you do the job right." •••

"I love cattle, I love the farm. And I really like the people involved in the industry."



Dairy Farming

By Shirley Jones

THERE was a day when all you needed to be a dairy farmer was a friendly cow and bucket.

From such simple beginnings has sprung the streamlined, computer-directed, technically oriented industry of dairy production. This industry is marked in the 1980s by its great challenges for anyone who wants to become a dairy farmer. And, according to established producers, it is a profession that offers great rewards as well.

One such example is Nelson Gardner of Bridgewater, Virginia, who was born and raised on a dairy farm. At age 19 he faced a decision which would determine the course of his life: whether to buy his father's dairy with totally borrowed money or to enroll in college. Thirty-four years later, Gardner is a supporter of higher education but says he is glad he chose to purchase the dairy instead.

"I love cattle. I love the farm. And I really like the people involved in the industry," says Mr. Gardner. "The challenge of breeding good cattle and the chance to make my own decisions have been major advantages," he says. And above all, he says, "I liked my job. You have to. If you don't, you won't do it well."

There are drawbacks says Mr. Gardner. Long hours and frustration when there is bad luck that can't be affected by management are foremost. And, at the forefront of many people's minds is the difficulty that young people have in entering the field.

The reasons include the large amount of money required to buy land, equipment and stock as well as the high cost of interest on debt. However, Mr. Gardner is quick to say he thinks there are opportunities for young people in dairy production. "You just have to go the gradual route these days if you aren't part of a dairy family," he says.

Researchers at Cornell University agree. After a study of New York State farmers, results indicate many young men and women are "creating" their dairy careers.

There are many ways to do so, says John Brake, an agricultural finance expert at Cornell. Renting, partnership, employment by a dairy, part-time farming and buying are all viable options with a reasonable chance for success. The young dairy farmer must be careful to consider innovative options that don't require borrowing large sums of money, since farmers in heavy debt are usually under the greatest financial pressure.

Should prospective dairy farmers go to college or vo-tech school after high school? Yes, says Dave Wieckert of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

"I usually tell students to consider how much farming has changed over the past few years," says Mr. Wieckert. "Then I tell them to look to the future and imagine that much change while they are actually farming. That usually convinces them that they need all the basic education they can get."

Mr. Weickert says basic science background is important—chemistry, statistics and computer science along with communication. "Dairy students are often in a leadership role in cooperatives and breed organizations and must be prepared to communicate well enough to lead," he says.

Whether or not advanced education is needed depends on each student's situation. Mr. Weickert suggests several alternatives: the four-year program or two-year program at a college or university or classes at a vo-tech school. The advantage lies in getting away from home into a new environment "to see a different way of doing things."

Mr. Gardner agrees. He suggests accounting, economics and general business courses. "A person should get all the education he or she can. Then if for some reason the farming doesn't work out, you'll have something to fall back on."

However, Mr. Gardner encourages a positive approach and says the challenge of producing good cattle makes for an interesting career. "My wife and I were able to raise a fine family who all enjoyed growing up on a farm. That accomplishment is number one compared to everything else." •••

Shirley Jones is a former FFA State Officer, WCP counselor and national FFA information intern. She currently works as Director of Communications for Agri Business Associates in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Already a dairy farmer?

THE Cornell study suggests some common mistakes made by beginning farmers. John Brake makes suggestions for avoiding common traps.

*Always have a written contract with your partner(s), landlord, lessor or other business associates. "Even if your partner is your father, a written contract is extremely important to keep terms clear—for both parents and children," Mr. Brake says.

*Don't attribute poor results to bad luck. "Describing poor management of the business as bad luck doesn't work. Problems must be recognized and solutions found. Most problems are the result of poor management, unforseen circumstances and the inability to respond in an appropriate way," Mr. Brake points out.

*Plan well. "Several of our farmers made the mistake of not having enough feed for the winter. By the time they needed it, they were very short of cash." •••

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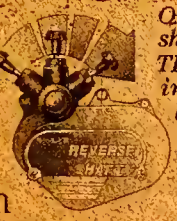

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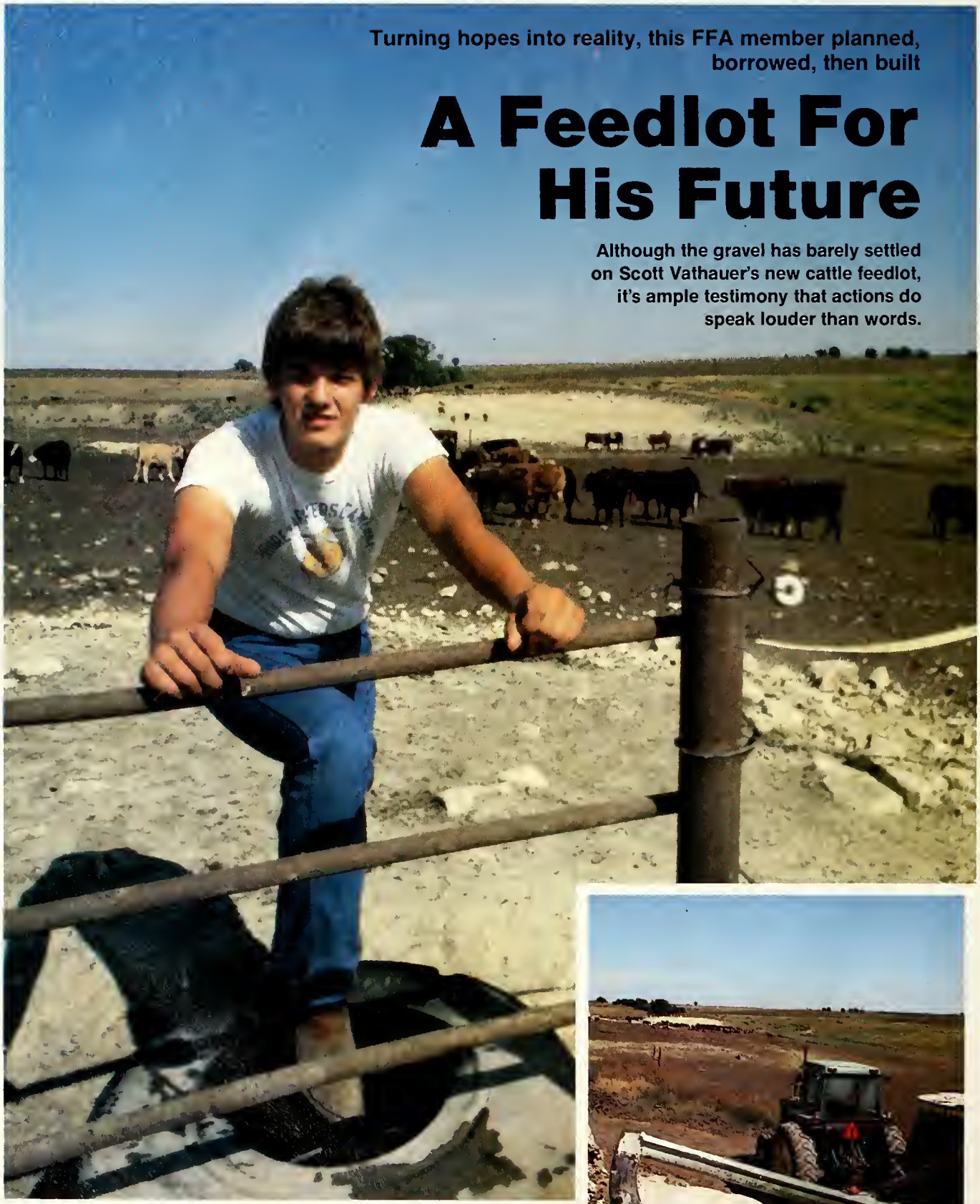
Turning hopes into reality, this FFA member planned, borrowed, then built

A Feedlot For His Future

Although the gravel has barely settled on Scott Vathauer's new cattle feedlot, it's ample testimony that actions do speak louder than words.



Photos by Author

Above, Scott Vathauer pauses before checking an automatic waterer on his new cattle feedlot. At right, he steadies the auger while grinding feed.

By Michael Wilson

SCOTT Vathauer has never had anything handed to him on a silver platter. And it *could* be the reason for his success.

Scott, 19, lives on a productive family farm near Barnes, Kansas. He believes deeds are more important than words. So instead of talking about getting started in farming, Scott's *doing it.*

"The reason Scott is where he is now is because he wasn't afraid to do things," says Scott's FFA Advisor Dan Palmateer, of the Valley Heights, Kansas, FFA Chapter.

But never mind words. The proof, as they say, is in the pudding. In Scott's case, the mixture is made up of over 250 feeder cattle and a simple but effective cement bunk and fence feedlot system, which Scott bought and helped build himself. Further proof that words don't accomplish a goal—action does.

"It was the same way with the cattle and building the feedlot," continues Mr. Palmateer. "He's looking to the future. He's not afraid to dive in."

Scott says his father, Dean Vathauer, has been "farming all his life" in a diversified grain operation, farrow to finish hog operation and cow/calf operation. But he had little experience as a beef cattle operator—Scott's career goal.

Although the FFA member wanted to produce cattle on a full-time basis, the feedlot outfit did not become reality until Scott graduated from high school in 1982.

"When I got out of high school I had these old wooden feed bunks that were pretty much shot," says Scott. "I decided if I was going to run cattle there'd have to be some drastic changes."

And so with the help of his FFA advisor and family members, Scott went to work. He planned details and ordered equipment. He decided on fenceline feed bunks because "much of the fence available was shot as well."

Above, Scott unloads feed to cattle with a portable wagon loaded on the back of a pickup, carefully dumping the mixture into the new fenceline feed bunks.

With little experience behind him, Scott borrowed the money needed for the lot. He bought $10,000 worth of bunks, concrete, waterers, fences and other materials. He poured over 400 feet of concrete slabs and set 400 feet of fenceline feed bunks. "I also ran water lines and set two large waterers to give me four feedlot pens with a capacity of about 100 head each," he says.

The cattle feedlot, located a few hundred feet behind the Vathauer farm, is less than a year-and-a-half old. The white gravel roadway is still settling.

To help recover costs, Scott sold off other assets in the family farm. "I had a few sows, but I'm getting out of the business. Most of my interest is in cattle. I just like working with them, I guess," he says with a smile.

"I've been around cattle all my life," he continues. "We'd been talking about doing this since I was in high school, but we didn't have the time to do it until after I graduated." That year, Scott was named the Kansas FFA Association's diversified livestock winner. Last fall he earned central region FFA honors in the beef production proficiency award, sponsored by Nasco and Sperry New Holland.

Management key to success

Scott hasn't been in the cattle business long. But his willingness to make such a financial commitment demonstrates confidence. This young man knows good management will play a big role in his future success.

If the past is any indication of Scott's abilities, he's in good shape: he started with 23 feeder calves four short years ago. He now feeds over ten times that many. Good management decisions have led to healthy stock, with few disease problems.

"We've lost a couple calves, but really not many," says Scott, "only two out of 500 marketed since I started in high school."

"It's either good management or blind luck," adds Mr. Palmateer with a laugh.

Scott decided early he would feed out heifers only. "Heifers finish out a little lighter than steers, but you can purchase them cheaper and usually sell them for more," he says. Healthy, growthy calves, "something that will finish out over 1,000 pounds," is what he looks for when he's in the market for new feeder stock. In high school, Scott participated in FFA cattle judging and meats judging contests, experience which he says helps greatly when it comes to making marketing decisions.

"I usually buy cattle at 650 pounds," he explains. "I try to buy calves that suit our needs." During their stay at the Vathauer feedlot, calves will be checked for shipping fever, poured for lice and ticks, given growth implants, pregnancy tests and a thorough "going-over" by a local veterinarian.

The cattle are fed silage, ground hay and grain until they reach 700 pounds. Then they are gradually "worked up" to full grain with ground hay mixed with it until they are at their finishing weight.

Grain from the Vathauer farm helps supply Scott with necessary feed. He relies on his own small section of cropland for much of it. Still, his own milo crop supplies only one-fourth of the total feed he needs in a year. He buys milo from his farming brothers, to make up the difference.

Scott calls on order buyers from two large meat companies when it's time to sell cattle. He says an important factor buyers look for is herds that finish at the same weight. "Most of the packers look for uniformity, something that finishes over a thousand pounds," he says. "The bad ones go to the sale barn and are sold on the hoof."

Scott's acreage is also an example of his determination to become established in farming. He spotted a good deal on land five years ago. With his dad providing collateral, Scott weighed his options and gave himself the green light. He borrowed $140,000 and made the purchase.

"In 1979 I thought land prices would go up faster than interest rates," he explains. "I still feel that in the long run it will prove to be a good investment."

Although he's confident, Scott is not unrealistic. He's 19 years old, but he's already weathered some of the worst economic times imaginable on the farm. And he knows the cattle business could turn sour—management or no management.

"You're never insured you'll make a profit," he says. "But the bottom line *is* profit. The rising cost of interest, for example, takes away from your profit."

"Scott's too modest," argues Mr. Palmateer. "He went out and bought 200 acres by himself, which was a pretty big step. Instead of sitting here saying to himself, 'I wish I had 200 acres,' he went ahead and borrowed the money. He's used to taking risks."

Scott says he hopes to become further established in the next few years, with eventual hopes for expanding the feedlot. "I can't say how much, though. A lot depends on the cattle market. But for now, it's a solid start," he says.

Indeed, it's a solid start for any one this young and inexperienced. But Scott has let his actions speak for themselves, making solid investments of time, money and energy in the new feedlot operation. It should be no surprise then, when Scott Vathauer reaches his goal as an established producer in the cattle business. After all, actions *do* speak louder than words. •••

The Struggling Farm Machinery Industry:

Are Brighter Days Ahead?

At one point it looked as if some farm equipment companies would not survive the long, crippling farm recession, not to mention PIK. As a result of the scramble, the industry changed dramatically. Here's a look at what happened—and how those changes may affect the farmers of tomorrow.

By Michael Wilson

LIKE the sputtering sound of a tractor's gas tank gone dry, the farm machinery industry has been slowly squeezed of its lifeblood since 1980.

Bruised and battered by one of the worst farm recessions in history, machinery companies and dealers have stood helpless as high interest rates crippled farm purchasing power and huge inventories sat rusting on dealer lots.

Today, four years later, brighter days seem to be just around the corner for farm machinery companies. Industry experts predict a 10 percent increase in 1984 sales, citing grain harvesting equipment and large tractors as highest growth areas. "We're out of the 'survival mode'," says Jim Woodard, communications manager for International Harvester.

But analysts say the industry has changed dramatically, and that it will never be the same as those peak years before 1980.

How will those changes affect farmers? More importantly, how will they affect you—the farmers and agribusinessmen of tomorrow? Before that question can be answered, let's take a look at what happened:

For farm machinery companies, optimism ran high for the decade of the 80's. Most firms were coming off a record high sales year in 1979. But a combination of poor economic factors beginning in 1980 made sales of tractors and combines slip.

Like lightning, the industry was sent reeling into a dark, grim coma, caused by one of the worst farm recessions since the 1930's. The market in North America began drying up. In 1982, tractor sales fell 26 percent from already depressed levels of 1981. Combine sales fell 40 percent; balers, 35 percent; forage harvesters, 32 percent. By the end of the year, one usually positive spokesman from Massey Ferguson said with a sigh, "I don't think any of us are going to look back at this as a vintage year. The conditions in the farm machinery market are the worst since the last depression."

By May, the industry was running on three flat tires with the fourth about to blow. Most companies operated at 50 percent of capacity, frequently less than half of the 1979 level.

Just when it seemed things couldn't get worse, 1983 brought more bad news. For the first time in years, farm exports, growing steadily throughout the 70's, began drying up. By May, the industry was running on three flat tires with the fourth about to blow. Most companies operated at 50 percent of capacity, frequently at less than half of the 1979 level.

When USDA introduced PIK, a farm program which took millions of acres out of production, some farm machinery companies were already scrambling to avoid bankruptcy. Today, some are still scrambling. "PIK was good for the farmer and bad for everyone else," said one farm machinery dealer grudgingly.

In the midst of this turmoil stood the farmer, helpless and frustrated. After years of acceptable net farm income, producers faced record-high interest rates, low incomes and even lower prices for their products. Faced with *those* choices, farmers opted to tighten their already taut belts and stretch still another year of use out of old machinery.

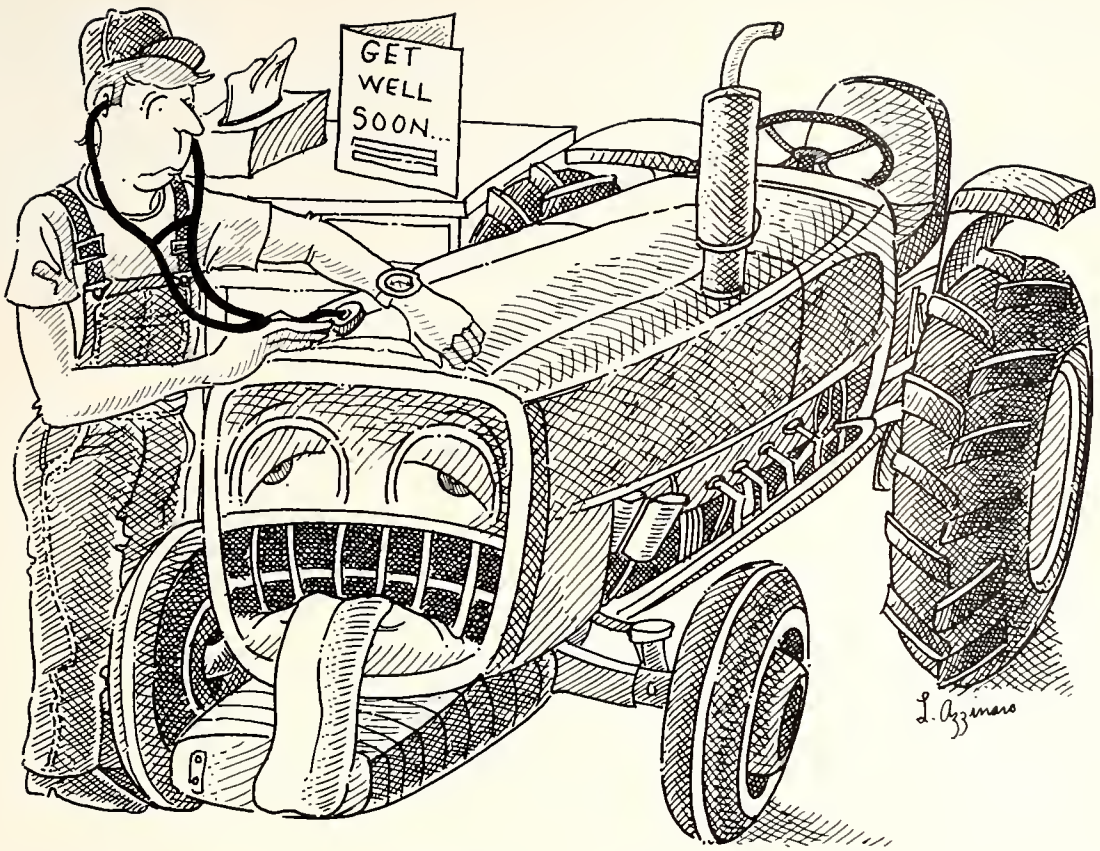
Today, farm machinery manufacturers are running on reserve fuel, watching the market closely and predicting that 1984 will be a rebound year. Indeed, better days do seem to be on the horizon: farm income is higher—mostly due to last year's PIK—and low inflation has held production costs down. Farmers may plant fencerow to fencerow, which is just what companies hope for.

Even so, the true extent of the damage to companies, dealers and farmers, still remains to be seen.

Companies Take Early Steps

Emmett Barker is president of the Farm and Industrial Equipment Institute (FIEI), the trade association which represents those companies affected by the recession. He says the recession had an even affect throughout the industry.

"1983 was the worst year in terms of unit sales of major items of farm machinery that we have recorded since we've been keeping statistics in the early



60's," he says. "None of the companies have escaped the impact of these severe economic times. But some were affected early and made adjustments early—those are the ones beginning to come out of it now."

Early adjustments were not enough to ward off heavy financial losses, suffered by almost every major company. International Harvester, a major farm machinery producer, lost an estimated $2 billion in 1982. Even mighty John Deere and Co., the largest farm machinery firm in the country, lost an estimated $1.8 billion in 1982.

Massey Ferguson, Ltd., one of the first to be affected, took steps.

"We were determined not to let the future manage us, but that we would manage our own future," says Victor Rice, president of the company.

"The firm was producing too many products in too many places. We took a hard look at every line of the business, and asked ourselves, 'Are we making the most of every resource we possess?'"

The answer, echoed throughout the industry, was no. So Massey became more price competitive. It consolidated all product research and design at its world headquarters in Toronto, Canada, and it launched heavily into telemarketing. The company sold off outside interests, streamlining efforts on producing and marketing farm and industrial machinery. It reduced factory footage by 36 percent, cutting its work force from 68,000 workers in 1976 to 29,700 workers by the end of 1982.

Mr. Barker says most major companies followed Massey's example. "In an effort to reduce inventory, some companies shut down factories for extended periods of time," he says. "Where possible, they cut down warehouses or consolidated manufacturing, only producing equipment where it was necessary to do so to fill a market. Most all have reduced staff by 50 percent or more."

WOODARD: "We've gone through a really trying period, but we're emerging from that threat. We're concentrating our efforts on efficient marketing so that when the market does turn around, we'll be ready."

In addition, manufacturers froze salaries, cancelled employee benefits, slashed capital spending and encouraged early retirements.

Meanwhile, companies like International Harvester and Massey Ferguson were forced to restructure debt agreements to stay in business. IH, hampered by a long worker's strike in 1979, has weathered its share of storms. But the company has just completed its third debt restructuring, "probably the last one we'll have to go through," assures Mr. Woodard.

"We've gone through a really trying period," he says. "But we're emerging from that threat. We're concentrating our efforts on efficient marketing so that when the market does turn around, we'll be ready."

Like Massey Ferguson, IH became smaller, leaner and more efficient. Because of these changes, companies like IH and MF have emerged stronger than ever, ready to take on the "pent up demand" of farmers in need of new machinery in 1984 and beyond.

Dealer Outlook

From all indications, major producers of equipment deserve an economic "pat on the back" for making the right decisions needed for survival. But small, local farm dealerships were sometimes forced out of business as a result of the consolidating and slashing moves.

According to USDA figures, dealer expenses rose 13.4 percent—almost $45,000 per dealership—between 1980 and 1981. High interest rates were the major cause, pushing up the cost of maintaining inventories while keeping sales down, thus chewing away at profits. The lackluster farm income performance has forced farmers to purchase cheaper, used equipment and parts, which provide less profit.

When PIK came along, many farmers figured they could make more money by leaving corn planters and combines in the shed for a year.

In an effort to give its dealers a fighting chance, International Harvester

(Continued on Next Page)

Farm Machinery

(Continued from Page 31)

launched a "crop swap" program, with Payment-In-Kind farmers in mind. In effect, the crop swap was designed to make equipment purchases easier by arranging for farmers to exchange PIK certificates for cash through a commodity broker. Then farmers used their PIK money as a down payment on new machinery.

"We made no requirements on the farmer to buy IH equipment. We were just providing a service," says Mr. Woodard. "We don't have any statistics on the success or failure of crop swap, but it did bring a lot of people into the dealerships."

Emmett Barker says, "Even during the best of times, some dealers were going broke because they just weren't good managers. During these worst of times there were some dealers who made money because they *were* good managers.

"It's put a real strain on them. But the net result is there are fewer and better managers."

Like their parent companies, many dealerships may emerge stronger than ever as the economy begins to grow again. The survival moves have trimmed waste, sharpened management, and made dealers more aggressive in providing service and catering to the needs of farm customers.

"We were determined not to let the future manage us, but that we would manage our own future."

—Victor Rice, Massey Ferguson

1984...And Beyond

Today, farm machinery firms and dealers face a new and different marketplace, filled with new challenges. Foreign competition from equipment companies like Claas, Kubota and Deutz will be higher than ever, especially in marketing smaller horsepower tractors. Still, most U.S. farmers shy away from foreign makes because of little product reputation and parts availability.

"U.S. manufacturers will remain the strongest, dominant line in the higher horsepower markets for the same reason foreign competition has made strides in lower horsepower markets," says Mr. Barker. "We have the competitive edge because this is the principle market—that's what we're geared up to do."

Mr. Barker says farmers are going to be more and more particular about their farm equipment purchases in the future.

"As a general rule, farmers are going to continue to be far more discriminating in their investments in machinery. They must have a basis for paying it off, it must be cost effective and it must pay for itself fairly shortly," he says.

"Cash flow is going to be the name of the game for farmers in the next ten years. That means the selling of farm machinery is going to be a function of making the purchase compatible with the farmer's cash flow situation."

"Cash flow is going to be the name of the game for farmers in the next ten years. That means the selling of farm machinery is going to be a function of making the purchase compatible with the farmer's cash flow situation."

Jim Woodard, of IH, agrees with Mr. Barker. "I think if any company is going to stay above board they'll have to stay in touch with the farmer and provide the farmer with a quality product that will give him the best return for the dollar," he says.

"That's the only way you're going to survive." •••

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The 1984 Washington Conference Program:

Leadership, the FFA Way

FFA's Washington Conference Program is set for another summer full of leadership training, so pack your bags and head for the nation's capital!

JIM Alwan, a Chapter Farmer from Sycamore, Illinois, heard about it from others who attended. He participated last summer—and came back a different person.

The same held true for Gina Walker, FFA member from Yanceyville, North Carolina; and Heath Ellis, from Rockwell City, Iowa. In fact, over 1,600 FFA members attended the *Washington Conference Program* (WCP), FFA's national leadership workshops, in Washington, D.C. last year.

Almost always, FFA members go home with new friendships, renewed enthusiasm for their organization and new goals for their lives.

The FFA expects as many or more FFA members to pour into the nation's capital this year also, as WCP kicks off yet another year of leadership workshops beginning in June. "This year promises to be just as good or better than any year previous," says John Pope, one of two directors of the 1984 conference. FFA will operate two separate conferences, held eight times through the summer in week-long sessions beginning June 11.

John says the Washington Conference Program takes a "five-star" approach.

"The five star concept is what we use to promote growth in the individual FFA member as the week progresses," says John. "The first star symbolizes their week of opportunity; the second star, leadership potential; the third, citizenship responsibility; fourth, the chapter program; and fifth, the future.

"In using the five star concept, activities are developed and centered around the 'star' for the day," explains John. "For example, for citizenship, FFA members visit Capitol Hill and meet with congressmen and senators. They visit Arlington National Cemetery, which gives them a sense of patriotism, and a night tour of Washington D.C. giving them an appreciation of the beauty of our nation's capital.

"At the end of the evening, all the members have a chance to look back on the day as they sit by the reflecting pool at the base of the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument," adds John.

The major emphasis of the week is the Leadership and Personal Development Workshops, according to Tony Hoyt, FFA program specialist for Leadership. "They emphasize developing human relations, setting and attaining goals in different areas of young people's lives and communication," says Mr. Hoyt.

John has already served one year as a counselor. He has seen what a difference the conference has made in the lives of FFA members who have attended.

"The big difference is watching them come in on Monday—they're sort of timid, by themselves. They don't know anyone else at that time," says John. "It's something to watch them progress day by day through the week—they gain confidence, maturity, and a sense of fellowship with each other.

"By the time they leave on Saturday morning they leave with a new attitude and new perspective on life. A majority of them leave with the ability to speak in front of groups, the ability to be at ease with others and a need to help others attain their objectives in FFA," he says.

FFA members are encouraged to take new skills and leadership materials back to others in their chapter. That way everyone in your chapter can learn from one person's experience.

"One chapter may have an idea," says John, "and another member from another chapter will hear about it at the conference, take it back and implement it in his or her own chapter."

In addition to visits on Capitol Hill and educational tours of historic monuments, FFA members will visit George Washington's home at Mount Vernon and several Smithsonian Museums. They also visit the National FFA Center, meet with the National FFA Advisor and see the National FFA Supply Service, where all official FFA materials are developed and distributed.

The program costs $295 per member. That price covers all meals, lodging, conference operational expenses and materials.

Most students are able to finance their trip through alumni scholarships or National FFA Foundation scholarships, available in most states. Some students arrange to have their chapter defer some costs. One way or another, most FFA members and chapter advisors who have attended say the investment was well worth it. For more details on the program, see the brochure which was mailed to your chapter last month. You must apply by June 1, 1984. •••

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*Not available where prohibited by law.

Photo courtesy Sunkist

Above, current National FFA President Ron Wineinger, left, with 1982-83 national president Jan Eberly, climbs aboard Sunkist float.

Rose Parade Float Salutes FFA

If you're like most young people, part of your family's New Year holiday season is spent glued to the television to watch the annual Tournament of Roses parade, broadcast from Pasadena, California.

This year, though, something special happened for FFA members and their families. If you watched television that morning of January 2, 1984, you already know why.

As the parade passed by, millions of people saw Jan Eberly, past national FFA president from Fallbrook, California, and newly-elected National President Ron Wineinger, of Marion, Kansas, standing atop a spectacular multi-colored float, waving to the cheering crowd as TV announcers saluted the nearly 500,000 young men and women of the Future Farmers of America.

This was the first time such a television salute had taken place before such a large audience. It was seen by an estimated 1.4 million curbside spectators and another 125 million watching on television around the world.

The salute was offered by Sunkist Growers, Inc., a farmer-owned marketing cooperative of nearly 6,000 citrus growers with orchards in California and Arizona. Sunkist is a National FFA Foundation supporter and long-time supplier of citrus to FFA chapters around the country for fund-raising projects.

The float, titled "Sunny Day," depicted a farm scene with barnyard animals, a windmill, a fruit orchard and a picturesque old grain mill—a nostaligic, romantic view of rural America and the heritage and tradition of family farming.

The entire surface of the float was covered with masses of tulips, forsythia, narcissus, iris and other spring blossoms in a rainbow of colors. The trees in the miniature "orchard" were decorated with fresh oranges and lemons from Sunkist members' groves.

But Jan and Ron weren't the only two FFA members involved in the parade. Some nearby FFA chapters offered "float-decorating" services to builders of floats used in the annual event.

Wayne Pitzler, FFA advisor from the Chino, California, FFA Chapter, says his chapter has helped decorate and build floats used in the Tournament of Roses over the last three years.

"The floats are built in Pasadena throughout the year, and decorated with live organic material seven days before the actual parade," he explains. "During that time we supply a float builder with between 30 and 50 FFA members every day and every evening to help put on all the flowers and other materials.

"It's been a great fund raiser and an interesting project for the students," adds Mr. Pitzler. •••

Changing Irrigation Concepts

With diminishing supplies of water, farmers are now finding how important precise measurement is in irrigation.

By George Svenson

Right, an irrigation specialist uses a neutron probe to test root zone moisture in barley field.

FARMERS are changing their thinking about the way they water their crops. And as an FFA member, it's important for you to keep up to date on the latest trends in the fast developing science of irrigation.

Farmers are now using irrigation in areas that have plenty of rain. That's because it can give plants water *exactly* when needed, throughout the season. Nature doesn't, so irrigation can pay off.

Worldwide, only 13 percent of arable land is irrigated. Yet it produces 34 percent of the total value of food and fiber. In California's San Joaquin Valley, where irrigation is commonplace, 25 percent of U.S. food is produced on 2 percent of U.S. farmland. That says a lot about irrigation.

Today, irrigating farmers are shifting emphasis beyond "when" to apply water. Now, farmers are learning the best ways to gauge "how much" to apply at any given time.

The Great Mistake

Until recently, when it came time to irrigate, farmers put on plenty of water, "just to be sure." Now he's learning that how much water makes a tremendous difference, and that too much is a costly error.

"Here's the concept many farmers miss," says John Edminster, ag consultant. "They could under-irrigate 99 percent of the time. One percent of the time they could *over*-irrigate. However, that 1 percent may cause 99 percent of the damage. Yields fall, nutrients are washed below the root zone, fertilizer is wasted, long-term damage to soil structure—everything is affected."

Over-watering may have long-run damaging affects as well. This country's aquifers, giant underground lakes that may take eons to replenish, are being dried up much faster than with proper irrigating. The U.S. government reports that with present irrigation use, two million acres of a 5.1 million acre irrigated area in the midwest will have no irrigation ground water by the year 2020.

As a future farmer, that's something to think about.

"California farmers are pumping 652 billion gallons more than is replaced each year," said George F. Will, columnist, in the *Los Angeles Times* in 1981. "In parts of California's San Joaquin Valley, the land has sunk 29 feet since 1925 as groundwater has been pumped."

What can happen when over-irrigating is controlled? Plenty. Mr. Edminster claims the average amount of over-irrigation in California is 20 to 30 percent—"not bad compared to what we've seen elsewhere," he says. Added up, that 20 to 30 percent could supply the metropolitan area of Los Angeles with enough water for an entire year.

Farmers who do cut back benefit from lower fertilizer, labor and water-pumping costs, and higher yields. For example, one California farmer found that he was applying 12 to 15 acre/feet of water on sandy shallow soil that should have had only four acre/feet. When he cut his water application back to seven acre/feet, he got better growth, and nitrogen use dropped to one-fourth of his original amount. One irrigation and drainage specialist group reported saving $27.99 per acre in water on alfalfa ground after using neutron field probes to measure root zone moisture.

Fill Root Zone

Irrigation experts say measuring the root zone moisture is the first step to providing plants with the exact amount of irrigation. Fill the root zone, they say; no more, no less.

Although about 30 instruments are used for water management, only three field instruments can tell you how much to apply. One is the shovel. By digging to the bottom of the root zone, an irrigator can sample moisture content with his fingers. Another is the soil sampler tube shoved into the soil, which brings samples up from below.

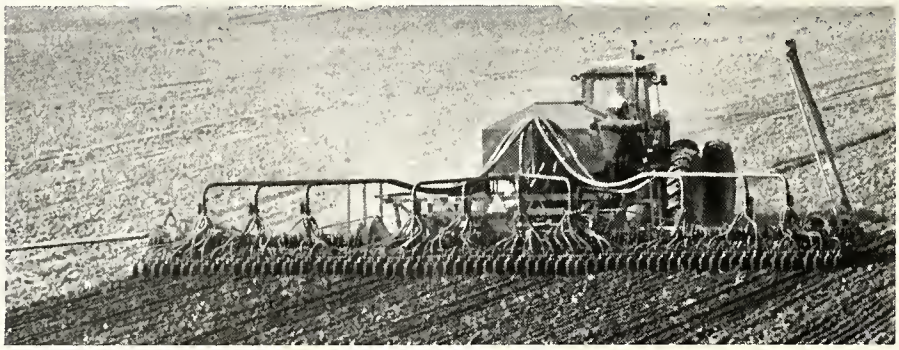
The third device is the lightweight neutron probe. A fieldman simply lowers the probe's "reader" down into access tubes, carefully located in each field. Within seconds the probe tells how much moisture is in each level of the root zone and below it. With the help of a five-day weather forecast and field history, a farmer can tell not only when to irrigate but also how much. Many times pumping costs can be cut in half, with increased crop quality and quantity.

Lightweight neutron probes are portable, dependable and easy to use, allowing an operator to cover acreage faster than with shovels or sampler tubes. The gadget was modified last year when CPN Corporation, originators of the first lightweight probe, added built-in memory capability. "It's extremely simple to work," says Mr. Edminster. "It's easier than typing a letter on a typewriter."

The probe does have its drawbacks, including the price tag: around $3,000 each. And test sites must be chosen with care or readings will not suit the field, wasting time and money. Probe tubes must be removed from the ground when machinery passes through a field, and critics say the probe does not measure how "tightly" the water is held in the soil, as does the tensiometer.

Best advice, say experts, is to use two devices and compare results. But first, decide whether you want to learn irrigation "fine-tuning" yourself or have an expert do it for you. Unless you have a good understanding of plant science, or irrigation experience, it's best to start with an expert's help. Except on large farms, the more costly instruments usually belong to a consultant, who charges a per-acre fee. •••

New in Agriculture



Above, John Deere introduces a new line of small grains seeding equipment called "air drills," which use air streams to carry seeds to furrow openings.

Above, Gator Manufacturing features model 81000 buck Supreme Safety Parts Washer, designed for fast parts cleaning. The unit comes with a 3-prong grounded plug, "stay-put" nozzle with brass flow control valve and a removable expanded metal tray that will hold up to 50 lbs.

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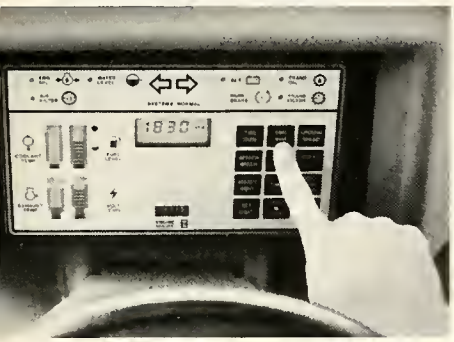
No one said record keeping is exciting. But Farm Home Offices, a national direct-mail catalog company, has introduced a 24-page publication written by farmers titled *Put Paperwork in its Place*, above, which should make record keeping easier and serve as an excellent guide for setting up a farm filing system.

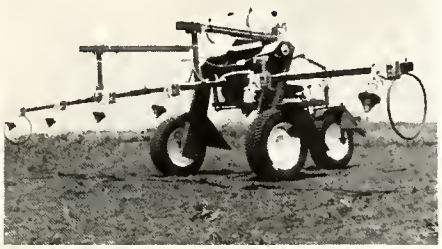
"You and your homemade turkey calls..."

Right, the Hiniker Company introduces the "Spray Commander," a new simplified, compact electronic crop chemical monitor and control which mounts on a tractor's instrument panel. The unit guides the operator through calibration by "asking" a series of simple questions about spray rates and equipment.



Above, J. I. Case has introduced a new energy-efficient model, the 3294 "Constant Traction" tractor. An interesting feature of the 3294 is its cab design—the above photo shows how new digital instrumentation opens up a line of communication between the tractor and the operator, allowing operators to monitor performance of various functions at the touch of a button.

Below, Ted Grau, of Soo Valley Sales in Sioux Rapids, Iowa, came up with this new bean buggy which offers micromax nozzles and boom option for low-cost controlled droplet broadcast spraying and optional ropewick application, broadcast spraying or spot spraying.



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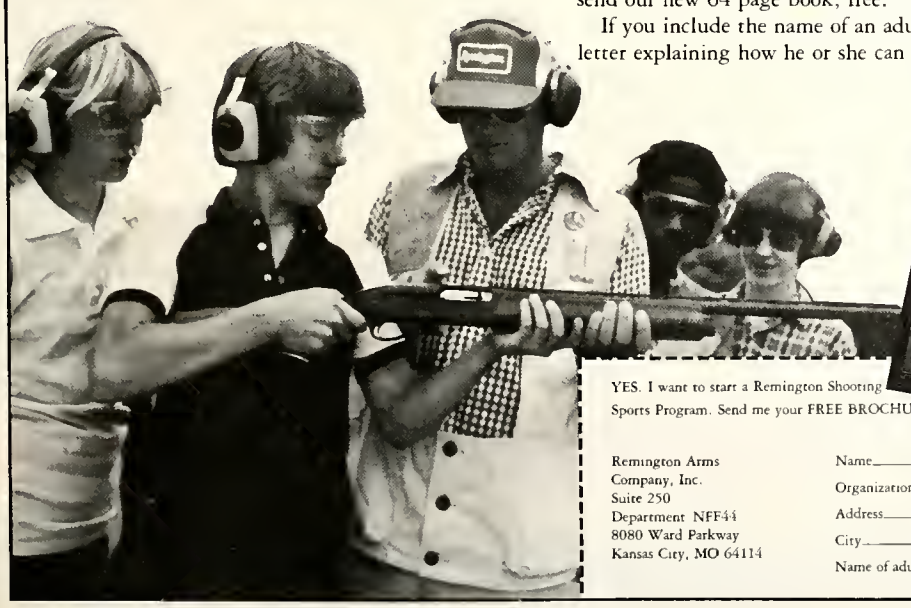

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News, Notes, and Nonsense from Everywhere

Chapter Scoop

by Jack Pitzer

Members of the *DeWitt,* IA, Chapter served as ring stewards for the county kennel society show. Those who help are given training.

N-N-N

Former FFA member **Sergeant Marvin Bernhardy** of the state police spoke to *DeKalb,* IL, members about winter safety driving.

N-N-N

Another former member, **Rob Leeds,** spoke to his chapter in *Fairbanks,* OH, about using the futures market to increase profit in farming. He had been a chapter officer and is currently farming.

N-N-N

"Aggie Update" is the school newspaper of *Norfolk,* MA, sponsored by the FFA.

N-N-N

The FFA helped put up new house numbers on 305 of the 320 homes in *Verdigre,* NE.

N-N-N

Fifteen hams are being cured by the *Willow Springs,* MO, Chapter for the national feeder pig show in May.

N-N-N

Tim Thomas, reporter for the *Lubbock,* TX, Chapter sent word about their raffle for a side of beef in order to send delegates to the national convention.

N-N-N

Name of the *Omro,* WI, Chapter newsletter is "Plow-Sharer" and is designed to "share up-to-date FFA news with our friends in the community."

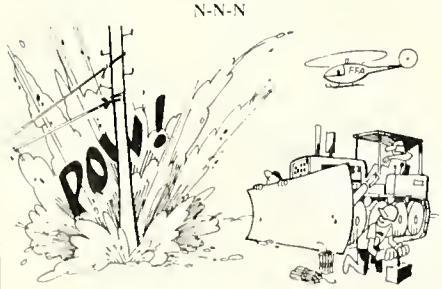
N-N-N

Ed O'Connor, president of the *Coe-Brown Northwood Academy* FFA Chapter in New Hampshire, reports their chapter has 100% membership with more than 103 dues-paying members.

N-N-N

A gun safety course for the community was sponsored by *Columbia,* IL, FFA.

N-N-N



Archbold, OH—The FFA juniors and seniors made arrangements to have a utility pole relocated so that entrance to the vo-ag building was easier. Then they poured a new driveway and sidewalk.

N-N-N

Denise Rawson, reporter for *Moapa Valley,* NV, Chapter sent word of their float in the Veterans Day parade.

The teacher appreciation luncheon organized by *Cleburne,* TX, FFA is a 12-year tradition in which members each bring a dish of food for a potluck luncheon.

N-N-N

Prize of $1 was offered by *North Crawford,* WI, for the student who could make the most words out of the word agriculture. This was an FFA Week activity.

N-N-N

The *North Crawford,* WI, Chapter also has three Greenhands play bingo with residents of the local nursing home each month.

N-N-N

Jeanne Wilk and **Tim Price** won cash prizes for their top scores in the Greenhand quiz bowl of *Springs,* MI.

N-N-N

The *West Valley,* CA, Chapter hosted **Kevin Schoonhoven,** their state FFA vice president, who spoke to the chapter about ways to boost membership.

N-N-N

The reporter for **Glencoe,** OK, FFA sent word that the FFA made bars for the school's windows in the computer lab.

N-N-N

As part of their membership drive, the *Hartford,* WI, FFA offered a pizza party to any ag class with 100% FFA membership. Five classes achieved 100% and won the pizza. Also the chapter is the largest ever.

N-N-N

Robert E. Lee FFA in Baytown, TX, decided to donate one smoked turkey to area nursing homes for every 50 turkeys they sold. The end result was 45 smoked turkeys to give away.

N-N-N

Yelm, WA, FFA sponsored a community presentation on "safety with holiday lighting" in December.

N-N-N

In order to become a safe chainsaw operator all members of the *Stigler,* OK, FFA had to operate a chainsaw and learn to correctly cut timber and underbrush. All part of a chainsaw safety workshop run by the chapter.

N-N-N

Hudson Sr. FFA in FL made $200 with a plant sale and used the income for the chapter hog program.

Merced, CA, Chapter is boasting a second place finish in the first California horse judging contest.

N-N-N

Mrs. Judy Ayers, home economics teacher, made a presentaion on everyday table manners and how you should eat at a banquet for *Thomas,* OK, FFA.

N-N-N

Lots of news came in about donkey basketball games. At the one in *Utica,* OH, the faculty beat the FFA 26-22.

N-N-N

South Side, AR, FFA sweetheart, **Becky Jenning,** was elected homecoming queen. Her escort was **Robbie Neal.**

N-N-N

When **Gilroy,** CA, members went to the rodeo in the Cow Palace last fall in San Francisco, some of the members toured the wharf area and others toured Alcatraz prison.

N-N-N

Seven members of *St. Cloud Sr.* Chapter in FL demonstrated parliamentary procedure and public speaking to the local Kiwanis Club.

N-N-N

Stuarts Draft Middle School FFA in VA made 60 marionette puppets to give to the local Salvation Army.

N-N-N

When the *Riverton,* WY, FFA members went Christmas caroling and were offered goodies they instead asked for a can of food to give to the needy.

N-N-N

Each week the *Aledo,* IL, Chapter reporter hosts a three-minute radio spot interviewing a member, a businessman or reporting upcoming events.

N-N-N

Lake Forest, DE, Chapter thinks they have set a record. Last November their chapter sent six state winning teams to compete in national judging contests. There are only eight contests total.

N-N-N

Don't let summer weather slow down your sending in the hot scoop from your chapter. Noticed that some states seem to have gotten organized and lots of chapters are sending in items. Illinois is one. Ohio always sends in tons. How about Missouri, Indiana, Tennessee, Kentucky, North or South Dakota or the Carolinas? Brag a little.

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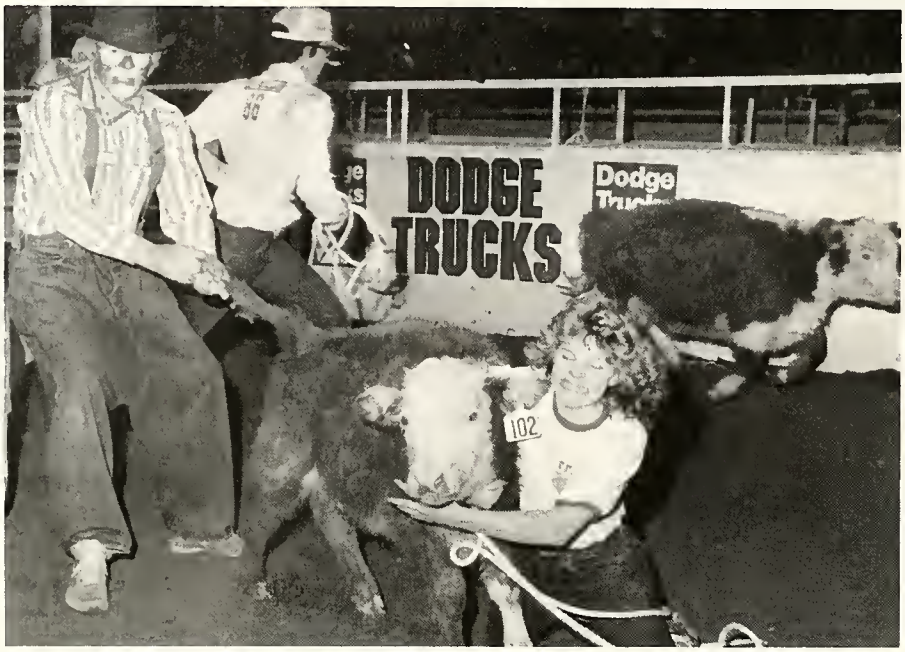


Close, But No Calf

Despite impromptu aid from famed rodeo clown Wilbur Plaugher, the calf slipped away from Rindy Relaford, a Crowley County, Colorado, chapter member, in the annual FFA day "heifer wrangle" at the 78th National Western Stock Show in Denver. Twelve of 19 FFA competitors had better luck. Equipped only with rope halters, they succeeded in catching a dozen roping calves turned loose in the rodeo arena. Winners each received a purebred Limousin heifer to raise and show in a special bred heifer beef class at the 1984 state fair. *(Howard T. Ryan)*

Shodeo Ended in a Pizza Chow Down

The Labette County, Kansas, chapter held its annual shodeo the first week of October. It is the chief money-making project for the chapter and provides the members an opportunity for some fun.

The two most popular events are the steer riding and the hide race. The steer riding is self-explanatory. In the hide race, a person is pulled the length of the arena on a cowhide by a horse. This is usually one of the dirtiest events.

Although the shodeo is clear profit, the winners of each event are awarded a very nice buckle from various businesses throughout the community.

Each member of the chapter is required to sell five tickets to the shodeo. This allows them to attend the FFA pizza party in December. This year's members ate 47 large pizzas in 50 minutes. *(Jeff Wilson, Reporter)* •••

Needed Firewood

The officers and members of the Stonewall Jackson, Virginia, FFA Chapter feel it is a special duty of ours to help the needy people of our community.

The committee gets information on families that need help with getting firewood, gets permission from local land owners and government agencies to cut firewood on their property, sets a specific date for the activity (usually on a free day such as Saturday) and lines up equipment needed for the job.

Older members are asked to bring in trucks and chainsaws, if possible, for this special job. Safety equipment is borrowed from the ag shop.

Younger members are recruited to help with the cutting, loading and splitting of the wood. Then after being cut, the wood is brought back to the school where it is split and then distributed to the families found by the firewood committee. *(Robert Spitler II, Assistant Reporter)* •••

Sheep Talk

FFA member Penny Hartel of Big Rock Chapter in Hinckley, Illinois, was named Illinois Lamb and Wool Queen at the annual sheepman's holiday and symposium sponsored by the Illinois Cooperative Extension Service and the state lamb and wool producers.

Penny's SOE projects include sheep and she has shown Suffolk across the U.S. at many shows.

She will speak at banquets, give lamb cooking demonstrations in high school home economics classes, participate in shopping mall promotions and attend as many fairs as possible. She hopes to introduce a lamb bratwurst sandwich at the state fair.

To win the crown, Penny gave a five-minute talk entitled, "Do Ewe Know Me?" *(Dianne Beetler)* •••

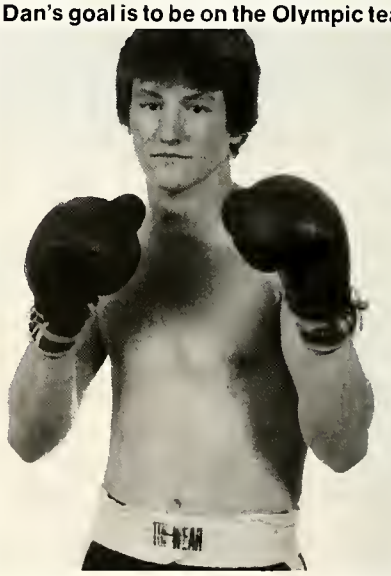
Real "Hands" On Experience

Danny Schnieder wants to earn a berth on the junior Olympic boxing team. He is a member of the Powell-Shoshone FFA Chapter in Wyoming.

Currently Danny is the 139-pound state champion. He's been Wyoming state champion in four different weights and has been ranked second and third in recent western U.S. regional qualifications.

Dan's supervised occupational experience program centers around a herd of ten crossbred cow/calf pairs. He raises 15 acres of malting barley on the family farm and also has a market steer, swine and horse projects. Dale Wood and Roger Lemons serve as Dan's chapter advisors. *(Mrs. Beryl Churchill)* •••

Dan's goal is to be on the Olympic team.



Green Income

The Housatonic Valley, Connecticut, FFA Chapter had a very successful Christmas production season at the Housatonic Valley Regional High School in Falls Village.

The student organization sold 750 trees, wreaths and decorations. We had lots of help from alumni and parents. The parents and alumni helped decorate, bunch and cut.

The FFA uses the money to pay for the parent-member banquet, to send representatives to Kansas City, to fix our truck and tractor, and to buy Christmas tree seedlings.

(Continued on Page 44)

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FFA in Action

(Pick up ACTION from Page 42)

The activity was run from December 8-23 during school and on Saturday and Sunday at our sales stand in the vo-ag greenhouse. This project allows vo-ag students to learn how to sell trees and wreaths as well as to run a cash register, make out sales slips, give proper change and make and decorate a wreath. *(Josh Eddy, Reporter)* •••

Escapee Makes Front Page News

One early morning in October some person let all the animals out of the Lancaster, California, ag lab. All the animals stayed close except one. His name is "J.D." and his story made the *Antelope Valley Press.*

According to the article the steer led sheriff's deputies on a chase, both in their patrol cars and afoot, mostly in the downtown Lancaster area for three hours during rush-hour trafic.

At that time, the deputies reported animal control officers fired a dart gun tranquilizer at the wayward steer which didn't faze him in the least.

Finally it ran into an alley and shortly before 8 p.m. the chase ended as the deputies were able to grab his halter and hold him for the animal control officers. The runaway steer is owned by Mark Tatro who is raising it for a project. *(Dan Dantice)* •••

Flowers by Hire

The horticulture members of the Westerville, Ohio, FFA are currently involved in an activity which is called the "plant of the month." This involves sending a plant or cut flower arrangement every month to the teacher who paid a fee at the beginning of the year. The idea has been a great success with 60 teachers in the Westerville system that have enjoyed a plant or arrangement each month. We will send out over 540 of these this year. It helps the members to learn a great deal about marketing and making arrangements. *(Tusdy Tonelotti, Reporter)*

Loan-A-Pet

Members of the Smithville, Ohio, FFA recently visited the Smithville Western Nursing Home and took several of their pets along. The pets included four cats, two dogs, a rabbit and a baby pig. The members talked with the residents and let them hold and pet the animals. The residents enjoyed the visit, as did all of the members. *(Dan Zollinger, Reporter)*

The Magic Christmas Trees

Members of the Perham, Minnesota, FFA Chapter came up with a very successful way to help four families in the community who have rather high medical bills.

The fund raising idea originated when a member of the community asked if the chapter would like to sell Christmas trees from his area tree farm. From there

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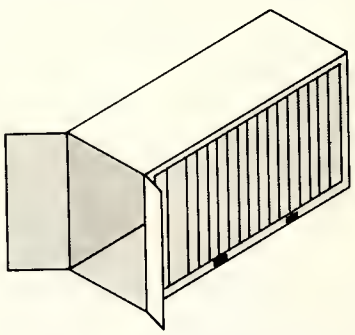

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the idea of donating the money the chapter could make to the area families was brought about by the chapter.

So for two days in the early part of December the members of the FFA chapter went out to the tree farm, selected, cut and loaded the trees to be brought back to the Perham High School parking lot where they were set up on display to the community.

On these two days, 200 trees were purchased from Mr. Tobkin at the price of $5 a tree and the chapter then sold them at the price of $10. All the trees cut were eventually sold and a total of $250 was given to each of the four families of the community. •••

One Leg at a Time

How do you move 20,000 chickens from one house to another? Well, one way is to go chicken catchin'. The Perryville, Missouri, FFA Chapter goes chicken catchin' four times a year for local poultryman Mr. Dave Danker, who annually raises and sells 90,000 started pullets. Each year the chapter volunteers their time and labor to empty his poultry houses as Mr. Danker pays the chapter a fee to do the work. And the work must begin after dark because the chickens don't calm down until dusk.

The nearly 20,000 chickens are caught and loaded in waiting trucks. The proper catching technique is "You take one leg of the bird. You group four of them together and carry them in your hand, and be very careful not to break their legs. If you break a leg on a bird—it's basically worthless."

It takes a large work crew of members to get 20,000 birds loaded onto trucks in one night and everyone has to hustle.

(Continued on Page 47)

Cabinet Ceremony

The governor of Florida, Bob Graham, presented members of the Bunnell Chapter a resolution of commendation from him for their BOAC project.

The presentation was made during the governor's state cabinet meeting. The resolution commended the chapter for reconstructing and cultivating salt-tolerant plants on sand dunes on six miles of city-owned beaches and for placing 110 trash receptacles.

The resolution also noted that "the Future Farmers of Flagler-Palm Coast High School have gained many experiences in the area of leadership, public speaking, understanding the working of city government, land preservation, erosion control and the conservation of our natural environment and natural resources." (Peggy Carter) •••

Chapter Advisor Jim Galvin (sixth from left) displays the resolution with Governor Bob Graham after the presentation in Tallahassee. Others in the picture, from left, State Comptroller Gerald Lewis; Agriculture Secretary Doyle Conner (and a past National FFA Officer); Attorney General Jim Smith; Insurance Commissioner Bill Gunter (also a former National FFA Officer); Bunnell FFA Chapter President David Futch; BOAC Chairman Gina Badger; State FFA Secretary Meg Potter; Flagler Beach City Commission Charman Betty Steflik; State FFA President Buster Smith; and Syd Crosby, a Bunnell chapter member who is also state FFA vice president.

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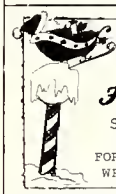

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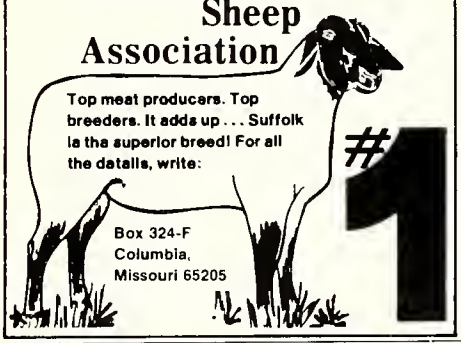

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FFA in Action

(Pick up ACTION from Page 45)

At their last catch the chapter had a special surprise. A local television station crew visited and filmed the members in action thanks to a tip-off from Advisor Tom Mooney. The thought of being on TV did much to spark excitement that night. *(Lisa Wills, Reporter)* •••

Saying Thank You

Todd Wiley of the Vinton, Iowa, Chapter presented a 1984 FFA calendar to Barry Lefstad, vice president at the State Bank of Vinton. Each year the bank sponsors the official FFA calendar program for the chapter. For 1984 FFA ordered 200 wall calendars and 2,000 pocket calendars. They distributed the wall calendars to administration, school board, high school faculty, FFA members and parents. The pocket calendars are presented as a thank you to fruit, cheese and sausage customers when deliveries are made.

Cuddly Classroom

During every year hundreds of FFA chapters conduct Food For America programs for elementary students. This picture of the program organized by Melrose, California, FFA is typical of the ones of youngsters cuddling and petting farm animals.

On the Air

Gretna Junior FFA in Virginia celebrated National FFA Week and created a lot of publicity for FFA and vo-ag.

Officers of the chapter wrote news articles for the three local newspapers—*Gretna Gazette, Stark Tribune* and the *Altavista Journal.* Also community service radio announcements were made by students at radio station WMNA. Other activities included public service announcements for television, constructing two picnic tables for the town's recreational park, an open house for parents, a parliamentary procedure demonstration to the student body at school, presenting FFA pencils and note pads to teachers and school staff, conducting a Food For America program at the elementary school, and conducted a best average daily gain contest for students for the annual junior livestock show and sale. •••

Invite the Competition

Scholarships totalling $400 were attractive prizes in the third Hyannis, Nebraska, invitational FFA judging contest.

There were eight schools entered in the contest with approximately 150 students judging.

Of the 60 students in the senior division, Jana Powles took first place. She received a $200 scholarship, a trophy and a certificate for her effort.

Carl West of Alliance received a $100 scholarship, a trophy and a certificate for placing first in the junior division. *(Gene Miller, Advisor)* •••

Action Lines

- Volunteer to raise your school's flag every day.
- FFA could maintain lawns for the school buildings during the summer.
- Use your camera and make photos for your SOE records.
- Sign up for FFA camp.
- Order some FFA jogging shorts for yourself.
- Use a video camera to practice your speech.
- Organize an FFA string band.
- Build a planter by the bus garage.
- Add green plants to the foyer to the gym.
- Everyone go to the FFA show together and support chapter exhibitors.
- Involve Greenhands by giving up your copy of the magazine after you've read it.
- Talk to the oldest farmer in town.
- Give FFA litterbags to the FHA members.
- Organize an area in the vo-ag classroom to practice speeches.

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The Joke Page

A farmer took a sick chicken to the vet. The good doctor told him the beak had grown out so much the chicken couldn't eat properly, but that if the beak were filed down a bit, everything would be all right. The vet had an emergency call and couldn't handle the job just then, but he assured the farmer it was easy to do; just be careful not to file the beak too much.

A few days later they happened to meet in town and the vet asked about the chicken. The farmer replied that it had died.

"Oh, too bad," said the vet. *"Did you file the beak down?"* The farmer replied that he had.

"You didn't file it too much, did you?" the vet asked.

"Well, no," the farmer said. *"It was dead when I took it out of the vise."*

Jameson Weber
Wittenberg, Missouri

"This is the Jones Chicken Farm, but I'm not your fine feathered friend."

One day a farmer decided to teach his wife to drive the farm pickup. He took her out to a seldom used dirt road and let her take the wheel. She was doing fine and he began to relax. Suddenly he heard a grinding noise and was thrown to the floor. As he picked himself up he asked what happened. *"Well,"* his wife replied, *"we were approaching a paved road so I took it out of this D for dirt and put it in P for paved."*

David Naylor
Lynn, Indiana

Joe: *"The doctor told me to drink lemon juice after a hot bath."*
Moe: *"Did you drink the lemon juice?"*
Joe: *"No, I haven't finished drinking all the hot bath water yet!"*

Richard Smith
Portales, New Mexico

On a hot August day two pigs tried to work their way deeper into the mud wallow. Snorted the first pig, *"I never sausage heat."*
"You're telling me," the other one grunted, *"I'm really bacon."*

Terry Jordan
Alexandria, Virginia

A man called the IRS to see if he could get a certain deduction on his taxes. The reply was *"No!"* followed by *"This is a recording."*

Jeff King
Schuylerville, New York

Bessy: *"What would happen if cows were put in orbit?"*
Bossy: *"I don't know, what?"*
Bessy: *"It would be the first herd shot 'round the world."*

Jeff Waters
Wapakoneta, Ohio

A church that loved good fellowship always served coffee after the sermon. The pastor asked a little boy if he knew why they served the coffee. *"I think,"* said the boy, *"it's to get the people wide awake before they drive home."*

Gregg Holloway
Anderson, Missouri

An old codger guided his car around a sharp curve and ran a minister off the side of the road and down an embankment. The old timer walked down to the car and asked the minister, *"Are you hurt? Are you all right?"*

The minister replied, *"I'm fine, thank goodness. The Lord was with me."*

The old timer replied, *"Well, you better let Him ride with me, you're going to kill him driving that way."*

Virginia Strickland
Lakeland, Florida

A rural boy, home from college, went to visit his hillbilly grandfather. *"Whatca larnin'?"* asked the old man.

"English, French and algebra."

"Say somethin' in algebra, son."

Not wanting to disappoint the man, the student said, *"Pi-R-squared."*

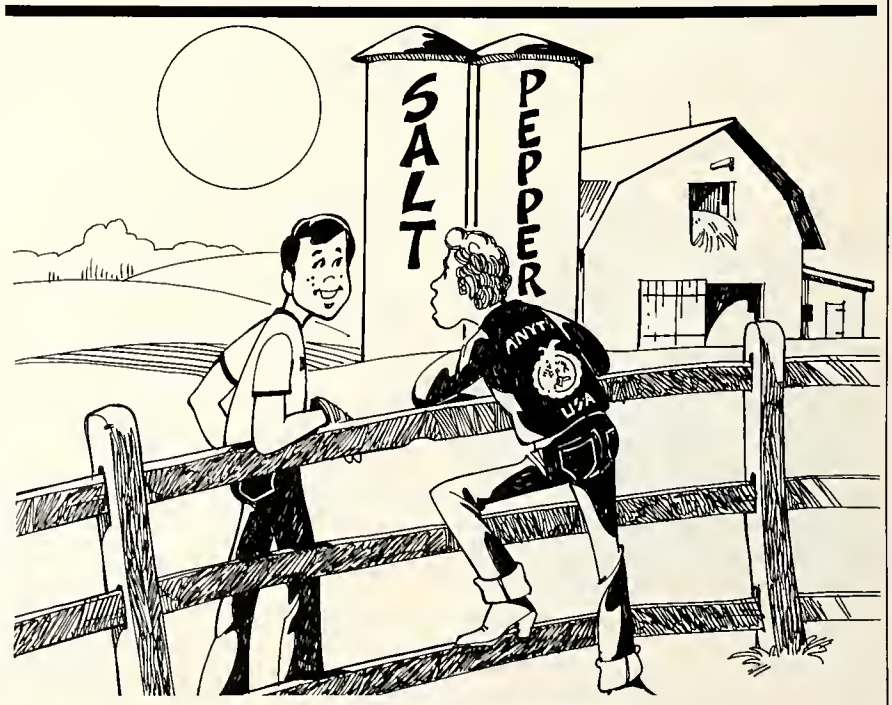
The old man exploded, *"You ain't larnin' nothin'! Everyone knows pie are round, cornbread are squared."*

Gary Watson
Bonifay, Florida

Q: What did the bottle-fed calf say?
A: I still prefer the udder way.

Tim Hershey
Ashland, Ohio

Charlie, the Greenhand



"Of course not, but it makes you stop and think."

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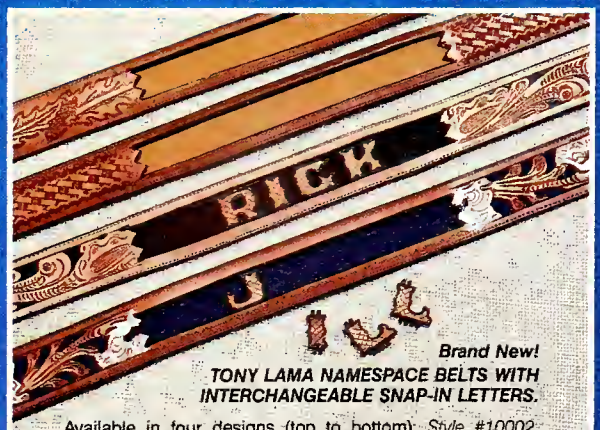

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